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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Politics and the Arts

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The Ingratiator

Scott Gration is an embarrassment. As Barack Obama's special envoy to Sudan, Gration has a dual mission: to help win justice and peace for the nearly three million Darfuris who currently live in camps after being subjected to genocide by Sudan's government; and to prevent that same odious government from initiating another slaughter in southern Sudan, where a 2005 peace agreement is looking more tenuous by the day.

How is he doing? Since taking the job in March, Gration has gone about ingratiating himself to the Sudanese government—an odd choice given that the government is a genocidal one. He seems interested only in offering Khartoum incentives, even though it has provided him basically nothing in return. He has pressed Congress to ease sanctions on Sudan. He has met with an American lobbyist for the Sudanese government. He has endorsed an absurd demand issued by Khartoum concerning an upcoming vote on South Sudanese independence. He has lamented to *The Washington Post* that many Darfuris distrust the government because of "psychological stuff." Explaining to the *Post* how he wants to deal with Sudan's rulers, he said: "We've got to think about giving out cookies. Kids, countries—they react to gold stars, smiley faces, handshakes, agreements, talk, engagement." This is both astonishingly offensive (why would one give "cookies" to a government that has recently killed hundreds of thousands of its own people?) and strikingly impractical: Most observers of Sudan agree that Khartoum has historically responded to sticks, while viewing carrots as an invitation to continue orchestrating violence.

GREG SOUSA, GOLDSBORO NEWS-ARGUS/AP

And that is what seems to be happening this time as well. Gration has touted his success in convincing Sudan to readmit some of the aid groups it ousted from Darfur earlier this year; but many groups were never re-admitted. (As Rebecca Hamilton recently documented for TNR Online in an on-the-ground report, the exit of these aid groups has had a particularly terrible effect on rape survivors.) Meanwhile, the government is reportedly ramping up attacks again in Darfur. Some also believe that the government is, through its militia proxies, behind a recent wave of violence in the South. In other words, Gration's soft approach to dealing with Khartoum is doing little to help the people of Sudan. And it may actually be making the situation worse.

Is Gration a cynic? A lightweight? We suspect worse: He is a man with an almost utopian theory about international relations. Before Gration was President Obama's envoy, he was candidate Obama's adviser. In that role, he spoke to *The New Yorker*'s Nicholas Lemann last fall. Lemann called Gration the "most mystical believer in Obamaism whom I met" and wrote that he was "more open than the other top Obama advisers in expressing a soaring optimism about the possibility of a less arrogant, more cooperative, more empathetic America leading the world." Gration told Lemann that "what doesn't work . . . is forcing a solution. Create an environment, give people the opportunity to air their differences, and see if they can come together." What an odd thing for a future diplomat to say; isn't "forcing a solution" one of the essential tasks of diplomacy? Moreover, the Sudanese government is not interested in airing differences with its opponents; it is interested in crushing them by violent means, so as to preserve its autocratic rule.

Now the Obama administration has devised an official Sudan policy. It is a perfectly anodyne document: It calls for the use of both carrots and sticks in dealing with Khartoum. It is, in other words, largely a blank slate. What matters, then, is not what's written in the policy but the instincts of the person who will carry it out. Given the limited nature of the options this administration would realistically implement in Sudan, our success or failure there basically rides on the skill of the envoy. It is he who must curtail Khartoum's behavior—who must be willing to stand toe to toe with a regime that has never shown any willingness to abide by agreements or negotiate in good faith. The person we have entrusted with this task is Gration. And we say this is unacceptable.

The consequences of Gration's approach go beyond Sudan. As Daniel Jonah Goldhagen argued recently in these pages ("Ending Our Age Of Suffering," October 21), the coddling of genocidal dictators sends a message around the world to other leaders contemplating crimes against their own people. The message is clear-cut: As far as the United States is concerned, you can commit genocide—and still get a smiley face.

At this point, the world has a pretty good grasp of what Gration believes about Sudan, and how he intends to act there. The question is: What does Barack Obama believe? If he believes that giving out gold stars for genocide is no way to conduct a foreign policy, then he should fire Gration and replace him with someone who will deal forcefully and effectively with Khartoum. And if he thinks that the current approach is a wise one? Well, if that is his view, we have a bigger problem on our hands than one inept special envoy. ◆

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Color Commentator

Rush Limbaugh's race obsession.

JONATHAN CHAIT

The saga of Rush Limbaugh and his failed attempt to acquire a piece of the St. Louis Rams may be the quintessential postmodern American racial incident. When word first leaked of Limbaugh's potential ownership, a couple of sportswriters, joined by a handful of cable news talking heads, repeated what turned out to be totally unsubstantiated quotes by Limbaugh praising slavery and James Earl Ray. (Documented outrageous Limbaugh-isms were available but generally ignored.)

This called for an enraged response from conservatives, who rallied to protest a grave racial injustice on par with the trial of the Scottsboro Boys, or possibly even the campaign against Clarence Thomas. Imagine—Rush Limbaugh, as pure an acolyte of Martin Luther King's ideals as can be found, accused of racism! Limbaugh defended his "belief in a colorblind society where every individual is treated as a precious human being without regard to his race." *National Review* heatedly editorialized, "Baseless accusations of racism are modern Democrats' McCarthyism"—temporarily forgetting, in the emotion of the moment, the NR editorial line on McCarthy, which lauds the long-deceased demagogue as a cold-war hero.

Now, it is certainly true that liberals have an unattractive tendency to casually impugn their foes as bigots. The Democratic primary's war of attrition between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama devolved into a tedious donnybrook of accusations of sexism and racism. If Clinton had won, her supporters would no doubt have spent the last nine months discovering sexist motives among her critics. Since Obama prevailed, though, liberals have busily studied the opposition for signs of racism. "I think an overwhelming portion of the intensely demonstrated animosity toward President Barack Obama is based on the fact that he is a black man," says Jimmy Carter. Buffoonish GOP Congressman Joe Wilson "clearly did not like being lectured and even rebuked by the brainy black president presiding over the majestic chamber," asserts Maureen Dowd.

Conservatives resent such attacks upon their motives. And justifiably so. Remember when characters like Jerry Falwell and *The Wall Street Journal* editorial page accused President Clinton of covering up a connection to cocaine smugglers in Arkansas? Conservatives fling deranged accusations at *all* Democratic presidents, without regard for race, gender, or creed.

An accusation of racism is a tricky thing. No consensus exists as to what actually constitutes racism anyway. Is it a hatred for all minorities? Opposition to formal legal equality? Support for public policies that have disparate racial impacts? Debates over whether so-and-so is racist usually boil down to the accuser and the accused having different definitions of the term.

This is true even of indisputable racists. Last fall, a local Republican group in California sent out a newsletter with a fake Obama dollar bill, labeled "food stamps" and decorated with fried chicken and watermelon. The group's president denied being a racist and, in her defense, pointed out that she had once supported Alan Keyes for president. A few weeks ago, Georgia restaurant owner Patrick Lanzo displayed a roadside sign reading, Obamas [*sic*] plan for health care: nigger rig it. Lanzo insisted, according to a news report, that "he's not a racist." More recently, Louisiana justice of the peace Keith Bardwell refused to marry an interracial couple. "I'm not a racist. I just don't believe in mixing the races that way," Bardwell argued, "I have piles and piles of black friends. They come to my home, I marry them, they use my bathroom." You heard the man: These are such close black friends he allows them to use his *bathroom*.

So whether Limbaugh is "racist" is a near-meaningless question. Suffice it to say that he's intensely race-conscious and constantly plays upon white racial paranoia. In Limbaugh's world, racism is everywhere—it's just directed at white people. Earlier this year in Belleville, Illinois, two kids who happened to be black beat up a kid who happened to be white in what witnesses and police say was a non-racial dispute over seating in a school bus. Apparently, the color-blind analysis of that incident is the following:

> Obama's America, white kids getting beat up on school buses now. You put your kids on a school bus, you expect safety but in Obama's America the white kids now get beat up with the black kids cheering, "Yay, right on, right on, right on, right on," and, of course, everybody says the white kid deserved it, he was born a racist, he's white.

Limbaugh has repeatedly cast Obama's agenda in racial terms. ("Obama's entire economic program is reparations.") Before Obama's election, some reporters found an undercurrent of fear among certain white voters that the election of a black president would usher in a wave of revenge against white America for its history of slavery and discrimination. Limbaugh has stoked those fears:

> The days of them not having any power are over, and they are angry. And they want to use their power as a means of retribution. That's what Obama's about, gang. He's angry, he's gonna cut this country down to size, he's gonna make it pay for all the multicultural mistakes that it has made, its mistreatment of minorities.

As the blogger Conor Friedersdorf has detailed, Limbaugh hurls charges of racism promiscuously. Obama? "[T]he greatest living example of a reverse-racist." Harvard Professor Henry Louis Gates? "[A]n angry racist." Sonia Sotomayor? "She's a bigot. She's a racist."

When I attended college just after the height of the political-correctness fad, I was exposed to the exotic but widely accepted theory that racial minorities could not, by definition, be guilty of racism. Limbaugh has formulated a sort of mirror-image philosophy: *Conservatives* can't be racist. "Racism in this country," he has announced, "is the exclusive province of the left."

The victimology of the leftist is bad enough—he is beset by racism. But the persecution complex of the conservative has managed to top that. The conservative is a double victim—of false accusations of racism and of racism itself. Limbaugh moans, "Frankly, the biggest problem I face in the current climate of political correctness is that I'm color-blind about it." Poor Limbaugh—he tries so hard to avoid race, but it just keeps finding him. ◆

TRB
From Washington

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Preserving Home Care Completes the Promise of Health Care Reform

"My name is Linda McCormick. I am a home care nurse with the Visiting Nurse Service of Greater Rhode Island. My 84-year-old Medicare patient, Concetta Ball, is so sick with diabetes and congestive heart failure that she cannot leave home without assistance. Four years ago she suffered a stroke, losing the ability to walk. We brought her back. Two years ago, another stroke took away her speech and my colleagues and I restored it. She is doing fine today."

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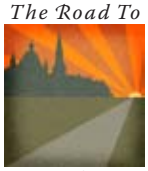
The Mall

Nuclear Option

An atomic bargain with the GOP?

Nukes, nukes, and . . . nukes. These days, when it comes to energy and climate change, that seems to be all Republicans want to talk about. Throughout last week's hearings on the Senate climate bill, Lamar Alexander kept interjecting that a massive ramp-up of nuclear power was the only *real* solution to global warming, bringing up the subject at every turn. For many of his colleagues, it's one of the few energy ideas that piques any interest at all. "Certainly, nuclear production, advancing that would be important to my side of the aisle—regardless of what bill you are talking about," Bob Corker declared.

That view is not wholly without merit. Many projections for a low-carbon future do envision a supporting role for nuclear power—indeed, a cap-and-trade system for greenhouse gases, by making fossil fuels pricier, could help usher in the first new wave of reactors in the United States since the 1970s. But that's not enough for the GOP, which wants to put nuclear into overdrive. The party's energy plan, released in July, calls for a whopping 100 new reactors built by 2030. That's twice as many as even the most optimistic industry forecasts envision, and, given that the plants are estimated to cost at least $6-$10 billion a pop and have difficulty attracting private investment, they would likely need hefty subsidies—something the right is supposed to frown at. "For reasons I don't fully understand," says Joe Romm of the Center for American Progress, "nuclear power has a magical place in the hearts of conservatives."



The Road To Copenhagen

The debate over nukes has long exacerbated the deadlock over climate policy. Of the handful of Republicans who think global warming is a serious problem—like Alexander—most refuse to address it unless nuclear power gets a starring role. But many Democrats and green groups are loath to lavish even more money on an industry that has received countless subsidies to date—including $18.5 billion in federal loan guarantees in 2005—yet still struggles to procure financing for new plants, to say nothing of concerns about safety and waste disposal. John McCain has chalked up his refusal to support the very cap-and-trade policies he once championed to "left-wing environmentalist organizations that are not allowing us to move forward with nuclear power."

Now, however, that deadlock may be dissolving. In October, John Kerry, the lead sponsor of the Senate cap-and-trade bill, co-authored a *New York Times* op-ed with Republican Lindsey Graham outlining a possible bipartisan deal that would include offshore drilling and nukes. "Nuclear power needs to be a core component of electricity generation if we are to meet our emission reduction targets," they wrote, endorsing the need to "jettison cumbersome regulations" and help utilities "secure financing for more plants." Graham has hinted that sufficient nuclear incentives could get "at least half a dozen" Republicans on board—allowing a climate bill to squeak through the Senate. As a result, many liberals and environmental groups are gritting their teeth and nervously bracing for a possible compromise. But that raises the question: If Democrats do haggle on nukes, will Republicans actually step up and agree to tackle global warming?

WHITE HOUSE WATCH ***With* DREW FRIEDMAN**

DAVID COWLES

Olympia Snowe wishes that health care reform cured anguish.

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Tracing the GOP's love affair with the atom isn't easy. For much of the postwar era, nuclear power had broad bipartisan support in Congress. It wasn't until the early 1970s, when environmental and consumer groups began fretting about issues like reactor safety, that divisions emerged. "Democrats started advocating a slower approach, with tougher regulations, rather than the all-engines approach that had been the norm," says Robert Duffy, author of *Nuclear Politics in America*. In the 1980s, as one nuclear project after another stalled in the face of cost overruns, conservatives blamed excessive regulations and green meddling for the industry's woes. Even as Ronald Reagan's Nuclear Regulatory Commission was revising rules to make it easier for utilities to build plants, says Duffy, "there was always this perspective that government was to blame."

The battle lines of this earlier clash are still visible today. McCain, for one, "feels instinctively that nuclear has been dealt an unfair hand," as one of his campaign advisers told me last year. Alexander was governor of Tennessee in the 1980s when the Tennessee Valley Authority, much to his chagrin, mothballed three planned reactors due to soaring costs. Local politics matter, too: Graham's state of South Carolina is home to seven reactors, and his political campaigns have relied on generous support from nuclear utilities. Plus, of course, hyping a low-carbon energy source lets conservatives scoff at environmentalists for not being "serious" about global warming.

Whatever the reason, the issue has often thrown a wrench in climate politics. When McCain brought his cap-and-trade bill up for a vote in 2005, he added a slew of nuclear subsidies—and lost four liberal Democrats who had voted for his 2003 version, including Barbara Boxer, Tom Harkin, and Russ Feingold. When, in 2007, Joe Lieberman and Virginia Republican John Warner put forward their own cap-and-trade bill, they shied away from nuclear altogether—and lost McCain. "We wanted to discuss it, but we were hamstrung by what we could get through working with Boxer," recalls Chelsea Maxwell, a former Warner aide.

Now that a climate bill has a realistic shot at passing, however, liberals may be softening their stance. In October, President Obama told a town-hall crowd in New Orleans, "There's no reason why, technologically, we can't employ nuclear power in a safe and effective way." (Alex Flint, a lobbyist for the Nuclear Energy Institute, or NEI, pointed to Obama's remarks as a sign that the tide was turning.)

Nuclear power has a magical place in the conservative heart.

Boxer, who is co-sponsoring the Senate climate bill, may not be thrilled with the idea of more goodies for the nuclear industry, but she did allow Tom Carper, a pro-nuke Democrat, to draft a few small provisions on things like training new nuclear engineers. Even Harkin, a staunch nuclear critic, is staying cautious: While he thinks the industry gets enough support as is, Senate sources say he's still in wait-and-see mode. "Right now, everyone's staying open-minded," says one staffer working on the issue.

Granted, much depends on what nuclear backers actually ask for. NEI recently circulated a wish-list to Congress calling for new tax breaks and a green bank that would dole out $100 billion in loan guarantees for clean-tech projects, including nuclear. Critics fear a disproportionate focus on nukes would crowd out more cost-effective energy projects and tie up money in plants that can take a decade to build and have a high risk of default. (A 2009 Moody's report called new reactors a "'bet the farm' endeavor for most companies" and said that federal support would only "modestly" mitigate this risk.) More contentious still, NEI and its allies have stressed the need to "streamline" the licensing process and reduce the delays that have plagued the industry and scared off investors.

At the moment, few environmental groups will publicly say what their red lines on nuclear are, but, privately, some suggest that any moves to weaken safety oversight or restrict public participation over the siting of new plants could repel even moderate greens. "There are a lot of very technical issues at stake here, and we don't think Congress should be tying the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's hands," says Ed Lyman of the Union of Concerned Scientists, a nuclear watchdog organization.

Plus, there's little point in acceding to the GOP's nuclear demands without getting anything in return. Alexander, for one, recently admitted that, even though he's taking part in talks over new nuclear provisions, nothing will persuade him to support a cap on carbon—which is the crux of any climate bill. "That's something to watch out for," grumbles one observer. "Is NEI actually going to work to bring new votes to the table?" Perhaps it's finally time to see just how much this love affair is worth.

Bradford Plumer

Andrio Abero

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O Brother

The most noxious sports fans in America go soft.

Something wonderful, or terrible, is taking place in Philadelphia. The city's sports fans, whose only consistent love has been for an inanimate object—the statue of Rocky—are becoming warm and fuzzy.

Sort of. Kind of. Well, about as nice as they are ever going to get in Philly, where fans have made their national mark with nastiness, boos, and a perverse fondness for losing. But now the city is confronted with a success story greater than any since the signing of the Constitution (which wasn't so pretty, either). It's the Philadelphia Phillies, of course. By winning the World Series last year and defeating the Los Angeles Dodgers in the National League Championship Series (NLCS) this year, the team has the opportunity to become the first National League team to win back-to-back World Series since the Cincinnati Reds did it in 1975 and 1976.

But finding comfort and peace in that, as most cities instantaneously would, is not so easy here. Philadelphians, particularly the hard-core indigenous ones living near Pat's Steaks in the south end of town and traversing such onomatopoetic avenues as Passyunk, actually enjoy wearing a chip on their shoulder. They like venting and feeling lousy and fatalistic, life a Sisyphean struggle. It was no accident that one of the Three Stooges, Larry Fine, was born in a South Philly rowhouse in 1902. Subsequent to Fine's death in 1975, an avid Three Stooges memorabilia collector and grocery-shelver named Frank E. Reighter assisted in fund-raising efforts to honor Larry with a mural. "He is a perfect typical type of Philadelphian," said Reighter, "always fighting the next level of people above him."

The World Series is symbolic of that, the Phillies against the New York Yankees. Ever since the Erie Canal opened in 1825 and the flow of trade shifted north to the Hudson River, Philadelphia has been knocked senseless into inferiority by New York. Residents there barely concede that Philadelphia exists, except as some vague bog somewhere along the East Coast. They think that Frank Rizzo, probably the most racist Northern politician of the past 50 years and the originator of such *bon mots* as "I'm gonna make Attila the Hun look like a faggot," is still our mayor. They think the city still has blue laws. If they visit at all, it's a hurried trip to the Museum of Art and then a hurried trip back, as if the city is riddled with an epidemic of swine flu. Similarly, the baseball version of the rivalry has been no rivalry at all in the eyes of New Yorkers. The last time the two teams met in the World Series was 1950. The Phillies carried the wonderful moniker of the "Whiz Kids," and the result was still a four-game sweep by the Yankees. Depending on how this year's version goes, the newfound calm of Philadelphia fans could quickly evaporate. History is not on the side of the doves.

The list of offenses that Philadelphia sports fans have committed over the years is endless, some funny, some just petulant, some shocking. The loyalists can literally drive people out of town, as was the case with Phillies' manager Eddie Sawyer in 1960. The team had finished last the year before, and Sawyer quit one game into the season on the grounds that "I'm forty-nine years old, and I'd like to live to be fifty."

No city reacted worse to the Brooklyn Dodgers' Jackie Robinson in his debut season of 1947 than Philadelphia. According to historian William Kashatus, pitchers aimed for his head. Runners went out of their way to spike him. And, in one instance, players stood at the top of the dugout aiming their bats at him while making the sounds of gunshots. Even before Robinson came, the Phillies' front office phoned Dodgers' general manager Branch Rickey and warned him "not to bring that nigger here." The Phillies were the last team in the National League to integrate, in 1957, and had segregated spring-training facilities through 1961.

Mike Schmidt was arguably the best third baseman ever to play in the major leagues. But his Hall of Fame career did not stop Philadelphia fans from mercilessly booing him at times. He exuded to fans an unpardonable sin—arrogance. Unable to take it, Schmidt publicly struck back. He told a newspaper reporter that the fans here were "beyond help" and "uncontrollable," setting himself up for even more evisceration, until he showed up at the next game wearing a wig and sunglasses (it may have gotten him the loudest ovation of his career).

Fans threw batteries at J.D. Drew from the outfield bleachers because of his refusal to sign with the Phillies after they drafted him in the first round out of college. They traveled to New York for the pro draft just so they could boo quarterback Donovan McNabb when the Philadelphia Eagles made him the second pick. They cheered when Dallas Cowboys receiver Michael Irvin lay motionless on the field with a neck injury, and some even continued to cheer when paramedics brought a stretcher onto the field.

During the home opener this season, when the 2008 World Series flag was hoisted, a fight between two fans took place about 100 yards away. In July, three men right outside Citizens Bank Park beat to death a 22-year-old man. According to police, the fight started over a spilled beer, and the victim, David Sale, was punched and kicked so badly that his face was unrecognizable.

And yet—and yet—Phillies fever was far kinder and gentler this year than it ever has been in the past. Fans, instead of waiting for the wheels to come off in

Phillies fans: Hurling batteries, hating Jackie Robinson, beating the crap out of each other.

David Cowles

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some spectacular and freakish way, expressed a confidence in equal measure to the team's. In early July, starting shortstop and MVP winner Jimmy Rollins faced total batter breakdown, hitting just .212 for the season. But fans resisted insurrection, and, by the end of the season, he was up to .250 with 21 homers and 100 runs scored. Similar leniency was shown to pitcher Cole Hamels. After an all-star caliber season last year in which he was also named the World Series MVP, he lurched to a 10-11 record in 2009. There have been a few boos, but the prevailing sentiment has been sympathy and support, since Hamels is still tender at 25.

The team is eminently likeable, with the heroics spread around—no single player uniquely dominant, Rollins one night, Chase Utley one night, Ryan Howard one night. It also has more than its share of hard-working lunch-pail pluggers, the kind of guys this city goes for. There's the ageless pitcher Jamie Moyer, the come-out-of-nowhere catcher Carlos Ruiz, and, most of all, manager Charlie Manuel with that Appalachian twang of his. When Manuel first got here, he was mercilessly mocked, but not anymore. In game two of the NLCS, Manuel lifted Pedro Martinez even though he was tossing a two-hit 1-0 shutout and had only thrown 87 pitches in seven innings. The Phils' bullpen could not hold the lead, and the Dodgers came back for a 2-1 win. The radio talk shows went crazy, but the team moved on and so did the fans.

Nor has the city been infected by any kind of the insufferable strut-your-stuff swagger that accompanied the Boston Red Sox's first World Series victory in 86 years and that has made its fans the most despicable in the major leagues. After the Sox won in 2004, documentaries flooded the market like summer mosquitoes. The Reverse of the Curse of the Bambino was invoked as if on a par with the historical ramifications of D-Day. Ben Affleck appeared on camera in Fenway so many times that it was hard to believe he still had an acting career, which he sort of doesn't anyway. And Fenway came to be seen as a cathedral, even though anyone who has been there and is remotely honest knows it's a dump, sacred only because writer after writer seems unable to differentiate between stinking bathrooms and cozy charm.

I went to the NLCS-winning game over the Dodgers. The Phillies crowd was raucous but not overly so. There was a sense of placidity in the sweet night air, the win just another step in the steady march toward another World Championship. Because of the new ballpark and an ownership that uncharacteristically decided to open its wallets, "Philadelphians are showing qualities not often ascribed to our city: appreciation and thankfulness," said Larry Ceisler, a diehard Phillies fan and owner of one of the top p.r. firms in Pennsylvania.

It all seems oddly graceful, this metamorphosis from a city of losers into a city of classy winners, or at least less belligerent ones. At the end of the sixth on the night that the Phils reached the Series, a kindly-looking man in a Dodgers hat stood in line in the men's room. Los Angeles has never been popular with Philadelphians because of its gloss and glitter. Actually, no other city has ever been popular with Philadelphians, except those that truly don't cause inferiority: St. Louis, Kansas City, Cleveland, Detroit, Dubuque. The Phillies had the game in hand at that point, and bathrooms are usually the place where fans here do their best trash-talking, particularly later in games when the beer has had time to take its hold. But only one person took up the challenge, saying over and over to the Dodgers fan that he would have urinated all over him if he had been within better striking distance.

In the Old Philadelphia, there would have been plenty of supportive laughter, the piling on that has given sports fans here their infamy. But there was nary a sound. The Phillies fan, clearly drunk with those eyes like elevators, one going up and one going down, simply petered out. He mumbled something under his breath, stunned by what had just happened in the New Philadelphia, and then, he carefully washed his hands before stumbling away.

BUZZ BISSINGER

Buzz Bissinger is the author of FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS, A PRAYER FOR THE CITY, *and, most recently,* SHOOTING STARS, *co-written with LeBron James.*

Department of Corrections

"Is There A Middle Way?" (November 4) misstated foreign troop levels in Afghanistan in 2004 and 2006 by including only the number of U.S. soldiers on the ground. There were also approximately 9,000 NATO-led troops in 2004 and about 12,000 NATO-led troops in 2006. A poem in the same issue incorrectly identified the title and author. The poem is "Scirocco: *Otello* in Venice," by the poet Peg Boyers. Also, the art in "The Front" should have been credited to Daniel Bejar. We regret the errors.

Mass Appeal

Inside the Obamacare laboratory.

POLLS SHOW that Americans are confused about what health care reform means. And, if you listen to members of Congress on television, you get the impression that some of them aren't certain, either. But figuring out what health care reform entails isn't hard. All you have to do is look at Massachusetts.

Almost three years ago, the state introduced an ambitious initiative designed to make sure nearly all residents have health insurance. Under this scheme, the state requires employers to contribute toward the cost of covering workers, while requiring individuals to get insurance. It sets up regulated marketplaces, through which individuals and small businesses can obtain insurance, and it forbids insurers from denying coverage, or charging higher rates, because of preexisting conditions.

These are the same key elements you'll find in the reform bills moving through Congress—which is precisely what has a lot of people worried, on both ends of the ideological spectrum. Conservatives tend to see Massachusetts as a classic case of government run amok. Liberals, although more sympathetic to the basic idea, say the reforms have provided too little coverage for too much money. There's even one argument on which critics from both sides agree: Massachusetts hasn't figured out a way to restrain the overall growth in health care costs. If national health care reform fares no better, the country could be in serious fiscal trouble.

The critics have some valid points, particularly on the question of costs. And, with key details about national health care reform still unresolved, understanding the shortcomings in Massachusetts could help lawmakers make the right choices. But the more significant story about Massachusetts is the one that gets told too rarely: the story of what's gone right. If Massachusetts offers a preview of where we are headed nationally, then Americans can look forward to a health care system that, however imperfect, will be vastly better than the one we have now.

HEALTH CARE REFORM in Massachusetts was actually the product of a long struggle that dates to the 1980s, when the state passed a law requiring employers to offer coverage to their employees or contribute toward the cost of covering uninsured workers. It was an ill-fated, if noble, effort: Before the law took effect, employers

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won repeal of its central provisions. Chastened, lawmakers in the ensuing years focused on incremental reforms, such as expansions of public programs for children and the restructuring of a fund to help subsidize charity care. The initiatives helped, but plenty of residents still struggled to find affordable medical care—either because their insurance was inadequate or because they were among the 10 percent of residents who had no coverage at all.

In 2006, though, reform advocates finally got a chance to try something big again. It was all thanks to a fortuitous political circumstance—one that spawned an unlikely alliance between Republican Governor Mitt Romney and Democratic leaders in the legislature. The Bush administration had decreed that it would not renew a special "Medicaid waiver," under which Massachusetts channeled some federal money to large safety-net hospitals, unless the state redirected the money toward expansion of insurance coverage. Compelled to act, Romney and the legislature agreed on a scheme that blended ideological approaches and demanded compromise from both sides. There would be insurance for everybody, but everybody would have to pay what they could for it. Liberals wouldn't get a single-payer plan or anything close to it; conservatives would have to put up with a large expansion of government, even by Massachusetts standards. Fittingly, Senator Ted Kennedy—who'd helped orchestrate the deal from Washington—appeared alongside Romney at the signing ceremony in Boston's historic Faneuil Hall.

Three years later, that system remains in place, and Massachusetts residents deal with health insurance in virtually the same way that all Americans would if Congress were to pass health care reform. By law, anybody living in Massachusetts must obtain health insurance or face a penalty, which this year will be as much as $1,068. For the majority of people, who work for large companies, that means buying the coverage their employers make available. For those who don't have insurance through a large employer, that means using the "Connector," a regulated market administered by state-appointed officials.

The goal of the Connector is to give everybody the same sorts of choices people working for large employers already have. It screens insurance plans to make sure they meet basic standards, like covering all essential care and limiting out-of-pocket expenses to $10,000 per family. Because buying insurance can be expensive—Massachusetts has the nation's highest premiums, at more than $13,000 a year for the average family policy—the Connector also makes subsidies available. Money for the subsidies comes from a variety of sources, including (token) contributions from medium and large employers who choose to pay a fee rather than provide health benefits for employees.

There's no disputing that the reforms have expanded coverage. During a period in which the proportion of Americans without health insurance has remained stuck at more than 15 percent, the proportion of Massachusetts residents without coverage has fallen dramatically, to below 3 percent, according to official figures. That is by far the lowest percentage of any state.

✳ *Explore Jonathan Cohn's blog for more on the politics of health care.* **THE TREATMENT** *at www.tnr.com*

Of course, coverage by itself is meaningless if it doesn't translate into more access to medical care or less financial hardship because of medical bills. And there is evidence, mostly anecdotal, that some people are really struggling under the new scheme, either because it's tough to pay the insurance premiums or because, even with coverage, their medical bills are a burden. But the overall picture looks encouraging. According to a study that two Urban Institute researchers published this spring, the number of working-age adults reporting that they skipped care because of high costs fell from 17 percent to 11 percent in the first two years after the law took effect. The gap was even more dramatic among those eligible for subsidized insurance through the Connector—that is, people making less than three times the poverty line, or around $66,000 per year for a family of four. Among those people, the proportion skipping care because of cost fell from 27 percent to 17 percent. And that's despite a rough leveling-off in the second year, most likely due to the fact that the recession meant lots of people were out of work and counting their pennies. When the economy rebounds, the number should decline even more.

Still, there is the problem of overall cost. The new rules for the individual insurance market have brought down premiums for people buying coverage on their own, which is no small feat. But the Massachusetts reforms haven't brought down prices on the whole. In fact, premiums for people who get insurance through employers are rising a tad faster than they are in the country at large. If costs continue to skyrocket, the state's health care reforms will become unsustainable, requiring either large cuts or tax increases.

Then again, until recently, Massachusetts hadn't seriously tried to reduce costs. The goal was simply to expand coverage and, perhaps, deal with costs later—which seems to be what's happening now. In July, a special task force recommended far-reaching changes in the way insurance pays for medical care, by, for example, paying physicians an annual fee per patient rather than a fee for every additional service. For years, experts have said such reforms could save money. But these arguments are only now getting political traction, and many in Massachusetts credit the reforms. As this argument goes, the new system, by giving the state a greater stake in health care costs, has focused public attention on the problem and provided the government with more leverage to solve it. The left also seems more invested in the cost issue now, if only because it recognizes that controlling costs is necessary to sustain the recent coverage expansions.

That doesn't mean Massachusetts will succeed. Many experts, in fact, think only the federal government has the power to make serious changes in the way medical care is financed and, as a result, practiced. But there are signs that such changes may be coming. President Obama and his allies have focused on costs in ways that the Massachusetts reformers never did. Many experts believe that the most aggressive measure on the table, the Senate Finance Committee bill, would, over time, reduce the annual increases in health care spending.

Of course, every cost-cutting measure offends at least one powerful interest. Already, groups representing doctors, hospitals, device-makers, and the drug industry have been striking deals with the White House or congressional committees—deals designed to shield their members from changes that hold out promise for long-term spending reductions. But, if Massachusetts proves anything, it is that you don't have to get everything right on the first try. Simply by addressing the coverage problem, you create political conditions for addressing the cost problem. And, in the meantime, you've put access to affordable health care within reach of nearly the entire population. It wouldn't be everything reform could be. But it would be a historic accomplishment all the same.

Jonathan Cohn

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The Reinvention of Robert Gates

How his ideological journey will shape the war.

MICHAEL CROWLEY

One afternoon in October, a blue and white jumbo jet flew high above the Pacific Ocean, approaching the international dateline. On board was the secretary of defense, Robert Gates, who was on an around-the-world trip that would end with a summit of NATO defense ministers, where the topic of the day would be Afghanistan. Gates was flying on what is often called "the Doomsday Plane," a specially outfitted 747 that looks like a bulkier Air Force One and was built to wage retaliatory nuclear war from the skies. Its hull contains metal wiring to shield its avionics from the electromagnetic pulse emitted by nuclear explosions, and a super-reflective coat of paint renders it what the military calls "thermal radiation protected." Officially known as the National Airborne Operations Center, the $223 million jet is the brainchild of former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, who feared that the Soviet Union could decapitate U.S. leadership with a surprise attack, and it bristles with communications equipment that can instruct American bomber pilots, ICBM crews, and submarine commanders to fulfill the compact of mutual assured destruction.

Today, the Doomsday Plane feels like a cold war anachronism. And, until recently, so did Robert Gates. For most of a CIA career that began under Lyndon Johnson, Gates had what he calls "a consuming goal": defending the United States from the Soviet Union, which he still refers to as the "Evil Empire," echoing the words of his onetime boss, Ronald Reagan. Some of Barack Obama's top aides knew that era only as children. But it shaped a Washington national security establishment

Before Robert Gates was a Washington wise man, he was a cold war hard-liner.

JASON REED/AP

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that is still struggling to adjust to a chaotic world of terrorism and counterinsurgency. No one straddles these contrasting periods more visibly than Gates, who today finds himself fixated not on Soviet missile silos but on Al Qaeda hideouts in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Even so, the past echoes: Gates was present as the cold war's end gave birth to modern Afghanistan. He helped oversee CIA funding for the Afghan *mujahedin*, who drove out the Soviets, and the aid cutoff that began a cascade of chaos and violence that culminated in the September 11 attacks. "I think you need to have a highly developed sense of irony," Gates told me in an interview aboard the Doomsday Plane. "Because twenty or twenty-five years ago, I was shoving arms across the border to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar," a former *mujahedin* leader turned anti-American warlord.

What's also ironic is the extent of Gates's influence over Obama's Afghanistan strategy deliberations. Perhaps no Cabinet member matches Gates's impact in the Situation Room as the White House reviews its war plan. It may be Washington's oddest partnership: a secretive white Republican intelligence insider in his sixties, and a charismatic young African American Democratic president who was barely 30 when the Soviet Union fell. Asked about the contrast, Gates flashes a wry smile: "I think about it all the time," he says.

In recent weeks, the contrast has verged on something like tension. The day Gates departed Washington on his plane, White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel had suggested that a decision about General Stanley McChrystal's request for more troops might wait until after a November 7 runoff election in Afghanistan. To his displeasure, Gates had learned about this new spin in the papers. He also was not impressed by the substance of it: "We're not just going to sit on our hands, waiting for the outcome of this election and for the emergence of a government in Kabul," Gates told reporters en route from Honolulu to Tokyo, where he was due to meet with his Japanese counterpart. His reedy Kansan voice barely cut through the engines' dull roar. For a veteran of so many foreign policy crises, Gates seems oddly shy—he tends to avoid eye contact while speaking, looking to the side or into the middle distance. While Afghanistan's fraud-ridden elections had "complicated the situation," Gates continued, "the reality is, it's not going to be simple, it's not going to be complicated one day and simple the next." Government legitimacy in Afghanistan would take time, he said, and "the president will have to make his decisions in the context of that evolutionary process." Translation: We can't wait for perfect conditions, Rahm. Let's get on with it.

The episode was a reminder that, while the admiration between Gates and the Obama White House may be mutual, it may not be unconditional. Gates has so far won lavish praise for his management of the Pentagon. "Based on where we are today, I'd say he's the best defense secretary I've seen in a long time," says Andrew Krepinevich, a military analyst who serves on the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board. But the easy part is probably behind him. The past several months have demonstrated that Obama may be wary of a major long-term U.S. commitment in Afghanistan. Gates, by contrast, seems convinced that Taliban gains would be a strategic disaster. And other important policy differences lie on the horizon. Gates's service to Obama has made him one of Washington's most revered figures and completed a years-long rehabilitation of his once-controversial public image. The question now is how long it can last.

"I DON'T THINK he's gonna say a troop number." It was Wednesday, and Gates was in Tokyo, at the modern Ministry of Defense headquarters. As he met with his Japanese counterpart to discuss U.S. military bases in Japan, Gates's traveling press schemed out questions for a post-meeting press conference. "I think he's made up his mind," another scribe replied to the first. A decision was made to aim low and ask Gates whether he had reached a decision, leaving the specifics to another day. Gates appeared at a podium, solemn-faced next to the Japanese minister. "Have you come to a decision in your own mind about the best way forward?" a reporter asked. But the question had been posed in two parts, and Gates answered only the first, unrelated question. It would be one of several futile attempts by the Pentagon reporters on the trip to get Gates to say that he had reached a decision.

That was little surprise. Gates has been extremely measured in his comments about Afghanistan. After McChrystal argued for his troop recommendations at a London speaking appearance last month, Gates called it "imperative" that differences over policy be aired "candidly but privately." That tone of discreet professionalism has become one of his defining qualities. White-haired and 66 years old, he is the elder statesman of the Obama administration—judicious, temperate, and objective, the model of a realist wise man. He has styled himself as the antithesis of the Cheney-Rumsfeld axis of the Bush administration, talking skeptically about military action against Iran and giving Obama political cover to scratch an Eastern European missile-defense system devised by the Bush team. "He's an intelligence analyst," says former Democratic congressman Lee Hamilton, who has known Gates for many years and worked with him on the fall 2006 Iraq Study Group. "That is how he is trained. He brings that perspective—factual-based, digging for information, deliberative, calm. He weighs options. He's not ideological."

But that was not always the case. In fact, the story of Gates's early government career is one of a brash and sometimes obnoxious young hard-liner. The son of an auto-parts salesman from Wichita, Gates was recruited by the CIA while getting his master's degree at Indiana University. After joining the agency, he took night classes at Georgetown University, earning his doctorate, with a focus on the Soviet Union. During a CIA career spanning four decades—which included stints on the National Security Councils of four presidents—Gates focused on the Soviet threat. Along the way, he showed signs of being an assertive ideologue. In 1984, for instance, he was so alarmed by the growing communist influence in Nicaragua that he advocated air strikes against the Sandinistas. In a memo to then–CIA Director William Casey, Gates called the leftist regime's existence "unacceptable" and recommended that the United States "do everything in its power short of invasion to put that regime out."

That fervor came back to bite him in 1987, when his ties to the Iran-Contra scandal sank his first nomination to head the CIA. No one publicly alleged that Gates, then the CIA's deputy, had been directly involved in orchestrating the scheme to sell arms to Iran in exchange for hostages and then use the profits to fund Nicaragua's Contra rebels. But there was evidence that Gates had been aware of the deal and had done nothing to stop or expose it. The independent Tower Commission found that the Reagan NSC had manipulated a CIA assessment of Iran to help provide the policy rationale for selling the country arms. Several senators held Gates responsible, including Bill Bradley, who said that Gates had been aware that "the CIA tailored its intelligence assessment on Iran to fit the needs of the policymakers of the White

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House." Seeing that he had little to no hope of confirmation, Gates withdrew from consideration.

As the cold war wound down in the late 1980s, Gates was also strikingly slow to appreciate the import of Mikhail Gorbachev and his campaign of *perestroika*. "He radiated a skepticism about Gorbachev that was so intense that his bureaucratic foes sometimes thought it contained a barely disguised nostalgia for the bygone era when Soviet leaders had glowered, stonewalled, bullied, and otherwise behaved according to stereotype," write Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott in *At the Highest Levels*, an account of the cold war's end. "He was very skeptical that Gorbachev could actually change the Soviet Union, and warned that Gorbachev might be succeeded not by another Gorbachev but by another Stalin," adds James Goldgeier, a George Washington University professor and Soviet expert.

So strong was Gates's skepticism of Soviet liberalization that he was willing to roil the foreign policy bureaucracy to express it, in ways that would make the circumspect Gates of 2009 blanch. In an October 1988 speech, for instance, Gates pronounced it "doubtful that Gorbachev can in the end rejuvenate the [Soviet] system"—adding that "Stalin would be proud" of Gorbachev's manipulation of the Politburo. The speech contradicted the prevailing Reagan administration position, leading then–Secretary of State George Shultz to scold Gates for trying to make policy outside proper channels.

Undaunted, Gates planned a similar address the following year, when he was deputy national security advisor under George H.W. Bush. This time he was stymied. When a draft of his speech reached the office of Shultz's successor, James Baker, his deputy (Dennis Ross—now a senior member of the Obama NSC) warned Baker that the speech was "ridiculous" and would undercut the administration's position. "I agreed," Baker later wrote in his memoir, and he prevented Gates from giving the speech. The Berlin Wall fell the following month.

Forgiving such missteps—Gates was still considered a sharp thinker and an even sharper manager—Bush nominated him to lead the CIA in 1991, but Gates's confirmation process was once again contentious. Critics within the agency charged that, as deputy CIA director, Gates had slanted agency reports about the Soviet Union to please his superiors—particularly Casey, his staunchly anti-Soviet boss. According to one Soviet analyst, Gates had "corrupt[ed] the process and the ethics of intelligence." Shultz himself later made this case, writing in his memoir that he confronted Gates in 1987 to complain that the CIA, where Gates was the number-two man, had allowed "policy views" to infect its analysis, and tried to "manipulate" him by cherry-picking intelligence. Gates vehemently denied this line of criticism with a meticulous point-by-point defense that helped to save his nomination. But some thoughtful Democrats, including Bradley and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, were never convinced, perhaps agreeing with the tart assessment from the liberal columnist Mary McGrory that Gates had acted as "the perfect butler" for hard-line higher-ups.

Gates was finally approved as CIA director by a 64-31 Senate vote. But the hearings also revealed a disposition quite different from the cool-headed elder statesman that he is today. Former subordinates cast Gates as abrasive and even bullying—often sneering at the quality of their analysis and even their prose. (One former CIA subordinate has said that Gates would sometimes return memos he deemed inferior stapled to government "burn bags.") "I think he was just a different guy back then," says one current Pentagon official who admires Gates. "He was kind of Rumsfeld-esque."

Friends say that exposure to such harsh and even humiliating criticism changed Gates. Temperamentally, adds someone who has known Gates for many years, "I think he was a little more tightly wound back then." More importantly, his bad call about Gorbachev and the Soviets also seems to have instilled in him a new sense of humility. It left Gates with a belief, as he writes in his memoir, that both the pressure of militaristic hawks and the outreach of diplomatic doves were required to bring down the Evil Empire he so hated. "Presidents need both hawks and doves," he writes in the book's conclusion, "because this aviary mixture allowed the Presidents, more often than not, to be the 'owls.'" Such lessons would have been affirmed when Gates served as deputy national security advisor under Brent Scowcroft—that dean of Washington realists, and one of Gates's closest friends—from 1989 to 1991. "I think he became more flexible," Scowcroft says. "He was a skeptic about Soviet motives, and then things happened so rapidly—the Soviet Union imploded—and I think that gave him an increased reality in his outlook." Adds Goldgeier: "Gates has become this great figure today and is such a wise man, but he was so wrong. I do think learning has taken place."

Soon after he left government at the end of the first Bush presidency in 1993, Gates returned to the question of politicized intelligence. When the Gingrich Republicans took power after the 1994 elections, a group of audacious young House conservatives, eager for the United States to deploy a national missile-defense system, accused the Clinton White House of manipulating intelligence reports in order to downplay the danger of ballistic missiles from rogue states like Iran and North Korea. To drive the issue, House leaders created a special commission to study the threat. Perhaps considering him a hard-line ally, they put Gates in charge.

But the young GOP Turks didn't get quite the result they'd hoped for. When the commission completed its work, Gates testified that the only politicization had come from "irresponsible" members of Congress who had made "unsubstantiated allegations challenging the integrity of intelligence community analysts." Miffed by Gates's findings, the House Republicans commissioned another panel—one that returned a more dire assessment of the rogue-state missile threat. (The leader of that study, poetically enough, was Gates's predecessor as secretary of defense, Donald Rumsfeld.) "I honestly didn't know which way [Gates] was going to go," says Janne Nolan, who served on the commission. "It was very politically unpopular to take on the newly elected Gingrich Congress. Gates conducted himself in a way that was so judicious. I thought, 'Wow, *this* is professionalism.'"

It wouldn't be the last time Gates would defy the right on missile defense. This fall, he reversed his prior support for installing a long-range U.S. ballistic-missile-defense system in Eastern Europe, and, instead, endorsed creating a new system to counter medium- and short-range missiles. The move infuriated conservatives, but Gates said it was justified by new intelligence reports showing delays in Iran's long-range missile programs. The decision helped affirm his reputation as an apolitical straight shooter—a view Gates himself encouraged. "I am often characterized as 'pragmatic,'" he wrote in a *New York Times* op-ed explaining the decision. "I believe this is a very pragmatic proposal."

In the Obama administration's long-running debate over Afghanistan strategy, Robert Gates may hold the most important swing vote. On one side are people like Joe Biden and Obama's

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Though circumspect, Gates has implied that Afghanistan needs more U.S. troops.

JASON REED/AP

political advisers, who warn that a major troop commitment could lead to a strategically and politically disastrous quagmire. On the other side are the military men whom Gates oversees, like McChrystal and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Michael Mullen, who has publicly called for a major troop commitment. Obama appears frozen between the two camps. But the president puts immense stock in his defense secretary's advice, and White House officials have made clear their desire that Gates stay in his job for the foreseeable future.

This sort of inside power is Gates's idea of heaven. In his 1996 memoir, *From the Shadows,* he wrote, "I once told Scowcroft that he and I were alike in at least one respect—our egos were no smaller than those who had highly visible positions; we just satisfied ours in a different way, through the private exercise of influence."

On one hand, Gates has no love for Washington—two brutal sets of confirmation hearings will do that to a man. He is wry about the city's absurd rituals and often jokes about White House aides who jockey their way into photos with the president and grown men crying because they were denied seats on Air Force One. After he left government at the end of the first Bush administration, Gates hit the lecture and corporate board circuit and bought a house in Washington state—about as far from the District as he could get.

While the admiration between Gates and Obama is mutual, it may not be unconditional.

But along with Gates's disdain for Washington comes a deep weakness for it. His memoir is unabashed about the narcotic effect of knowing an explosive national security secret before it makes the news. "However many times I experienced this sequence," he wrote, "it never lost the edge, the excitement of being a part of history. It is one of the great natural highs." Thus, when George W. Bush, who knew of Gates through his father, called him back into government in late 2006, the allure was hard to resist. Sure, Gates was happy as the president of Texas A&M University, where he won accolades from faculty and students alike for bringing on new talent and boosting the school's reputation. And, yes, Bush did have to ask twice: Gates turned down an early 2005 offer to become Director of National Intelligence. ("I had nothing to look forward to in D.C. and plenty to look forward to at A&M," he later said.) But that changed after Republicans were routed in the 2006 midterm elections and Bush finally sacked the obstreperous Rumsfeld.

When Bush appointed Gates, it seemed a potential sign that the president was ready to wind down the Iraq war. Gates had, after all, served on the Iraq Study Group (ISG), whose blockbuster December report endorsed a major troop drawdown from the country. But, by the time the ISG report was issued, Bush was already considering his Hail Mary play of surging more troops into the country. And Gates, apparently, was onboard from the start. He sent an e-mail to the commission's chairmen, James Baker and Lee Hamilton, recommending an additional 30,000 to 40,000 troops for Iraq. Gates, in other words, was privately recommending *more* troops than Bush wound up committing.

In public, however, Gates was cryptic about his views, and many key players had little idea where the new defense secretary stood. "The pro-surge wing was always worried, 'How committed is Secretary Gates to the surge?' " says Peter Feaver, who worked on Iraq policy for the Bush National Security Council. "It wasn't clear to me how he felt about it," echoes retired Army General Jack Keane, who some consider the surge's chief architect.

"He played a very similar role" during the Iraq debate to the one he plays now, says Stephen Biddle, a defense policy analyst at the Council on Foreign Relations. Biddle says Gates may simply still be forming an opinion. But, he adds, "the other possibility is that being the uncommitted swing vote is a pretty influential position to be in. You can imagine that, just as a matter of bureaucratic practice, he would avoid trying to stake out a position on this early and, instead, end up being the arbiter." In other words, a position that would give him the "private exercise of influence" on which he thrives.

In April of last year, a reporter asked Gates whether he might consider staying in his job under a new president. "The circumstances under which I would do that are inconceivable to me," he replied. But managing two wars is a hard thing to walk away from. So, apparently, were the entreaties of a wildly popular new president. Barack Obama began thinking about Gates as a holdover soon after he won the Democratic nomination, at the behest of Democratic Senator Jack Reed of Rhode Island, an Army veteran who had developed a kinship with the defense secretary. (Reed would serve as "the emissary between Gates and Obama,"

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according to Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell.) Keeping on Gates, it was clear, would offer political cover to a Democratic president lacking military credentials who proposed to withdraw from Iraq. Other key Democrats, including Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid, supported the decision. They admired Gates's forthright and apolitical demeanor—as when he was asked at his December 2006 Senate confirmation whether the United States was winning in Iraq and he replied, "No, sir." Rumsfeld this was not.

Like Rumsfeld, however, Gates is a shrewd operator—a "bureaucratic black belt," in the words of former under secretary of defense Eric Edelman. In the first months of the Obama administration, he kept a light travel schedule so that he could bond with the new White House team. There was a rough patch early on, though: During the transition, the Obama team arranged for Gates to meet with Richard Danzig, the former secretary of the Navy. Danzig had been a top Obama campaign adviser, and many people had expected him to become secretary of defense. After Obama tapped Gates instead, Danzig was in line to become his deputy at the Pentagon. By many accounts, the meeting did not go well. Even if it had, multiple sources say, Gates would never accept a deputy who was closer than he is to the president, especially one sure to be seen as a successor-in-waiting. "There's no way he could afford to have Danzig there," says a former Bush administration official who worked with Gates. "Everyone would start venue-shopping" when promoting their policy positions.

And Gates's mild manner belies a toughness that many an incompetent has come to rue. When *The Washington Post* revealed horrific conditions at Walter Reed Army Medical Center soon after Gates took his job, he fired the secretary of the Army and its surgeon general resigned. After revelations that the Air Force had accidentally flown six nuclear warheads across the country and mistakenly shipped four nuclear fuses to Taiwan, Gates fired that branch's secretary and chief of staff. And, when Gates came to doubt the man he had put in charge of the war in Afghanistan, General David McKiernan, he dumped him for McChrystal. (Too harshly, some say: "The way he treated McKiernan was just gratuitously ruthless," says one military expert. "He could have just quietly allowed McKiernan to retire. But he let it be publicly known that he was ending his career.") "Secretary Rumsfeld had a very fierce bark, but perhaps not as much of the bite that was required," says John Nagl of the Center for a New American Security. "Secretary Gates is not a screamer. He'll just cut your head off. And you'll walk away before you realize that your head is on the floor."

This spring, Gates applied that killer instinct to the toughest bureaucratic foe of all: the military-industrial complex. Shifting the Pentagon's spending priorities is a legendarily daunting task. But Gates was convinced that, in a time of tight budgets and new threats, military spending was disproportionately skewed toward expensive high-tech defense systems designed for improbable contingencies like war with China. Thus, he was determined to craft a Pentagon budget that spends far more preparing for the sort of counterinsurgency operations that the military has been conducting in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Gates's bad call about Gorbachev and the Soviets instilled in him a new humility.

To pay for that shift, Gates dropped the ax on the Air Force's beloved next-generation F-22 fighter jet (price tag: $143 million apiece) as well as the Navy's DDG-1000 stealth destroyer (about $2 billion) and an ultra-high-tech Army modernization system slated to cost upward of $100 billion. The trade-off, as Gates's April budget document concedes, is that the United States will assume a higher degree of risk in a major conventional war. That idea riled members of Congress whose states and districts are dependent on the jobs that big weapons systems bring. Republican Senator James Inhofe of Oklahoma warned that Gates was "gutting our military."

✳ *For additional political coverage by Michael Crowley and other TNR editors, visit* ***THE PLANK*** *at www.tnr.com*

But such talk couldn't derail Gates's budget plan, which Congress passed largely intact. And that, say Pentagon observers, is quite a feat. "The toughest place to make significant change in the Department of Defense is with its future," says Keane, who served as the Army's vice chief of staff. "He fundamentally changed the direction of the Army, forced them to institutionalize irregular warfare and changed the Army's entire modernization program. That is astounding." Gates, the cold warrior, had reshaped a Pentagon machine rooted in cold war thinking.

On October 22, the Doomsday Plane touched down in Bratislava, Slovakia. Gates had arrived for the NATO defense ministers' meeting. Also in the city was McChrystal himself, there to brief the European allies on his ambitious counterinsurgency plan. The news from the conference would be an expression of "broad support" by the NATO officials for the McChrystal strategy—another endorsement of a plan that will require tens of thousands more troops.

But, as Gates stood at a podium fielding questions, he kept his views as oblique as possible. "Drawing conclusions at this point is vastly premature. We're looking at a full range of activities," he said.

Though he now appears firmly in support of a substantial troop increase, Gates has struggled to reach his own conclusion about Afghanistan. Perhaps that's because he knows the complexity and unpredictability of the country all too well. In the late 1980s, Gates was instrumental in supplying arms and money to the anti-Soviet Afghan rebels. But, in another misjudgment of Soviet intentions, he never believed that Moscow would end its occupation. Even after Soviet leaders said in late 1987 that they would soon withdraw, Gates refused to believe it. He made a $25 bet with a colleague that it wouldn't happen before 1989. When Gorbachev announced the withdrawal less than two months later, Gates coughed up the money.

And, when the first Bush administration abandoned Afghanistan—cutting off financial and political ties with the country—Gates didn't warn of possible blowback. "We expected post-Soviet Afghanistan to be ugly," he has written, "but never considered that it would become a haven for terrorists operating worldwide."

When I met with him in his small conference room onboard the Doomsday Plane, I asked Gates how much he thinks about the Soviet foray into Afghanistan that he helped to stymie. We were somewhere above China, and Gates was seated at the head of the table, with a secure phone in front of him. "I think about it a lot, as a matter of fact. I try to make sure that I draw the proper lessons from their experience—and, clearly, their experience has had the effect of making me cautious of a very large U.S. presence." Indeed, for much of this year, Gates warned about the effect of a troop "footprint" that would make the United

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States look like an occupier. But, in the wake of McChrystal's report, Gates has modified his view. "I heard General McChrystal when he says it's not so much the size of the footprint as how you use those troops, and I accept that. I think that's right."

"It's also important to realize that the Soviets carried out a war of terror against the Afghan people," he continued. "I mean, they killed a million, probably made five million refugees, and no country in the world supported what they were doing. We have a completely different situation in all those categories right now. They also tried to impose an alien culture and social order on the Afghans that was completely contrary to their history and culture. So I think the important thing is, as we look at the Soviet experience, to draw the right lessons from it and not just automatically say that because they lost, everybody loses."

Though he wouldn't discuss his advice to Obama with me, Gates has made several public comments that suggest a belief in a large troop presence. Speaking at a CNN roundtable discussion in early October, for instance, Gates warned against ceding large swaths of territory to the Taliban, as a counterterrorism strategy may entail. "There's no question in my mind that, if the Taliban took large—took control of significant portions of Afghanistan, that that would be added space for Al Qaeda to strengthen itself," Gates said. Such an outcome, he added, would be "hugely empowering" for Al Qaeda's recruitment and fund-raising.

Gates also seems less concerned than Biden and Obama's political aides about faltering public support for the war. To be sure, he certainly appreciates the role of politics in foreign policy. Soon after he took over as defense secretary, he set out to lower "the political temperature" of the Iraq war debate. That was why Gates didn't push for the reappointment of General Peter Pace as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; although Gates had nothing against the general, he was too tied to the fiasco in Iraq to be reconfirmed without an ugly political fight. "What he did was to say we couldn't get him confirmed for a second two-year term without opening up discussions that would have been unhelpful to the national defense," says Richard Kohn, a military historian at the University of North Carolina.

Or take Gates's response, soon after he came to the Pentagon, to the soaring American casualties caused by roadside bombs in Iraq. Gates insisted that the Pentagon accelerate production of its heavy and expensive Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle. Doing so cost the Department of Defense $23 billion—a whopping sum even in Pentagon terms—and critics said the money could have been put to better use. Gates, who handwrites a condolence letter to the family of every fallen soldier, must have been genuinely moved to save American lives. But, adds a former Bush official, "there was a political motive, too. He understood that casualties were one of the things that was going to be a problem for us, and he wanted to give the president as much time as possible to execute his strategy."

Still, political considerations have their limits for Gates. He did, after all, support the Iraq surge at a time when it was immensely unpopular among Americans. The same appears to go for Afghanistan. "In any war that has lasted any time at all, those wars have never been particularly popular," Gates says. "Even toward the end of World War II, by 1944, people were beginning to be war-weary and wondering why it was taking so long. A president basically has to decide what's in the best interest of the country and then lead public opinion." Both the Obama and Bush administrations, he said, have not done a good enough job of explaining to the American people why the United States is fighting in Afghanistan. One exception he cited: Barack Obama's speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, in which he called Afghanistan "a war of necessity" to defeat Al Qaeda.

It remains to be seen whether Obama will take Gates's counsel on Afghanistan. But that's not the only potential friction point. Gates's caution about allowing gays to serve openly in the military—officially, he says the issue is under consideration—may be one reason why Obama has been dragging his feet on a pledge to end the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy. Gates also openly disagrees with Obama about the future of the Reliable Replacement Warhead program, a Bush-era effort to modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal that was quashed by the Democratic Congress last year. Gates believes the program is vital to the continued viability of the U.S. nuclear deterrent—again putting him in opposition to Biden, who argues that development of new warheads would undercut Obama's nonproliferation efforts and his call for a world free of nuclear weapons.

That's why observers on both the left and the right openly wonder whether, in the months ahead, Gates could find his job increasingly awkward. "The question is, is he loyal to Obama or to his vision on national security," asks Larry Korb, a former Pentagon official at the Center for American Progress. "Does he think about what's best for Obama, or what's best for the country?"

Add to that the view of others who say that Gates has already accomplished what he set out to do: rehabilitate his image once and for all. "I don't think you can underestimate how much the Iran-Contra scandals are driving him," says one former national security official who has worked with Gates. "He has bumped Iran-Contra down to the fifth or sixth paragraph in his obituary. If he had not come back, his obit would have been, 'President of Texas A&M who was mixed up in Iran-Contra.'"

Perhaps that's an overstatement. Yet it is undeniable that Gates's return to government has polished his image to an enviable shine. The hot-headed, scandal-tainted ideologue has been replaced by a pragmatic wise man shepherding a young president through wartime. But the war is not over. And, much as Gates contemplates returning to his quiet life in the Pacific Northwest—"every damn day," he told me—he seems determined to leave Afghanistan in better shape than he found it.

Doing that will require Gates to reflect on a past that he has, in other ways, left behind. Experience, he told me, "provides a perspective, or a prism, through which you look at the world. And, frankly, it can be both good and bad. Just like the Soviets in Afghanistan. Lots of lessons there. Lots of wrong lessons. You can get trapped by history." Aboard a plane built for a cold war apocalypse that never came, it was clear that you can escape it, too. ◆

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Anti-Statism in America

Why Americans hate to love government.

JOHN B. JUDIS

What happens to the liberal agenda in a country that doesn't trust the state?

Anyone who has followed closely the debate over national health insurance has probably noticed some peculiar inconsistencies in Americans' attitudes toward the legislation. A Pew Poll released on October 8 found "steady support" for specific elements of the health care plan, including the public alternative to private insurance, the employer mandate, and the requirement that everyone have insurance. Nonetheless, popular support for the plan itself was declining, with 34 percent "generally [in] favor" and 47 percent "generally opposed."

What accounts for this disparity? Certainly, some people fear that Medicare will be cut, or that "death panels" will be set up, but one of the most persistent concerns is not about specific provisions; rather, it's that the federal government will be taking over health care. In a *Washington Post* poll last month, a plurality worried that the health care plan "creates too much government involvement." In a poll taken October 9–13 by Public Strategies in conjunction with *Politico*, 52 percent of respondents feared that Congress would go "too far in increasing the government's role in health care." In a Harris poll in early October, 65 percent agreed, and only 22 percent disagreed, with the "criticism" that "the proposed reform would result in a government-run health care system." In other words, Americans are looking to the government for help, but they still don't like the government.

And this isn't just confined to the health care debate. You get the same inconsistencies if you look at polls about government regulation of finance and business. Polls show majority support for specific new measures, such as restricting CEO salaries and establishing a new consumer financial-protection agency, but the Public Strategies/*Politico* poll found that 68 percent of respondents preferred "better enforcement of existing regulation" over "new regulations." Again, Americans are turning to government, but they distrust letting it do too much.

This pattern of belief is deeply rooted in the American psyche and has regularly stymied efforts at reform. Americans have supported, or have come to support, *specific* governmen-

Jordan Awan

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tal remedies, such as Social Security, the minimum wage, and environmental and consumer protections. But, when a new program that expands government is proposed, they have displayed a *general* ideological predisposition against the power of government. As Obama tries to get his reform agenda through Congress, this predisposition is already proving to be a formidable obstacle.

AMERICANS' SKEPTICISM about government dates at least from the Revolution. In *The Liberal Tradition in America*, published in 1955, political scientist Louis Hartz described the Americans of 1776 as "Lockean liberals." He was using the term "liberal" in its classic connotation—more like today's free-market conservative or libertarian. Americans, he perceived, envisaged the state as strictly limited to protecting property relations among equal producers. They saw strong government—which they identified with the British crown—as a threat to economic and political freedom. Government, in Thomas Paine's words, was a "necessary evil."

The first adherents to this Lockean liberalism were followers of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson—small farmers and (in Jackson's case) urban workingmen who attacked the statism of the Federalist elite. But, after the Civil War, a rising business class invoked it against the political left, claiming that a policy of laissez-faire would best ensure a prosperous America. Lockean liberalism became free-market conservatism.

By the end of the nineteenth century, panics, crashes, yawning inequality, and other market failures provoked a challenge to this free-market conservatism; populists, socialists, progressives, and, later, liberals called for the state to curb the market. But, even during the high tides of liberal reform, free-market ideology held sway. In 1935, Americans overwhelmingly backed specific New Deal programs, but Gallup found them opposed to an increase in government regulation by 53 percent to 37 percent. In a pathbreaking 1967 book, *The Political Beliefs of Americans*, political scientists Lloyd Free and Hadley Cantril found that Americans suffer from a contradiction between "ideological conservatism" and "operational liberalism." According to their analysis of surveys they had conducted, only 16 percent of Americans—with blacks and Jews leading the way—were ideologically *and* operationally liberal.

There are a number of converging factors that help explain why ideological conservatism has endured and so often bested operational liberalism. Lockean liberalism clearly benefited from its identification, in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, with rapid economic growth. Like the British of the early twentieth century who clung to the gold standard as the secret of their past glory, Americans clung to the myth of the unfettered free market. At the same time, there was never a strong statist tradition from which reformers could draw their precedents. Americans lacked not only a feudal absolutist past, but also a history of successful state capitalism: Liberals and progressives could only invoke European or Federalist precedents. The great progressive manifesto that advocated a strong state, Herbert Croly's *The Promise of American Life*, appeared in 1909 and has been largely ignored ever since.

Lockean liberalism also got a boost from business lobbies and Republicans, who, in the first half of the twentieth century, worked to align "free enterprise" with the "American way of life" and liberal or progressive statism with socialism, communism, and fascism. Later, Republicans succeeded in identifying liberalism with taxes on the middle class and spending on minorities.

The success of this rebranding did in Obama's two Democratic predecessors. Republicans, working with the Business Roundtable and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, defeated Jimmy Carter's popular proposal for a new consumer-protection agency by raising the specter of a new government bureaucracy. It was downhill from there. A similar coalition beat back Bill Clinton's signature program for national health insurance by portraying it as a state takeover of health care. From September 1993, when Clinton's plan was introduced, to March 1994, the percentage of Americans who believed it represented "too much government involvement" rose from 38 percent to a clear plurality of 47 percent. Not long after Republicans captured Congress in 1994, Clinton declared that "the era of big government is over."

As Obama tries to get his reform agenda through Congress, he's facing this paradox: Americans like the public option and business regulations; they just don't like government.

LIBERALS AND PROGRESSIVES have fared poorly in the face of this staunch anti-statist tradition, but there have still been periods when they have broken through and enacted major reforms—during Woodrow Wilson's first term, Franklin Roosevelt's first term, Lyndon Johnson's first two years, and Richard Nixon's first term. They succeeded for different reasons at different times, but several conditions recur.

To begin with, market breakdown has always helped the cause of operational liberalism. Wilson and the reformers in Congress were able to pass legislation establishing the Federal Reserve and the Federal Trade Commission because a succession of depressions and bank panics had worried business and angered workers and farmers. Roosevelt's reforms, of course, came on the heels of the 1929 crash and the Great Depression, which raised questions about the sanctity of the market.

Democratic ability to neutralize business and energize the left has also been key to reform. Roosevelt and Democrats in Congress took advantage of divisions within business, as well as the public's distrust of business leaders, to get their program across. They also benefited from the energy of organized movements on their left. If it had not been for the pressure exerted by a renascent labor movement and by the followers of populist Huey P. Long and pension advocate Francis Townsend, Roosevelt (who was privately something of a Lockean liberal) might never have backed, and Congress might never have passed, tax reform, Social Security, and the National Labor Relations Act.

These same conditions—a divided business community and an energized left—were also key to the spate of reforms adopted during Nixon's first term. Business, fearful of an alliance between labor and the New Left, and of popular movements for environmental and consumer reform, acquiesced to proposals for regulatory reform put forward by Democratic majorities in Congress. Incredible as it may seem now, a 1970 *Fortune* survey of executives from the 500 largest firms found that 57 percent believed government should "step up regulatory activities." That support would quickly plummet, but it allowed a great burst of liberal reform to occur.

Of course, having party majorities in Congress has also been important. In 1935, Democrats and two allied parties held 71 of 96 Senate seats and 332

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out of 435 House seats. In 1965, Johnson could count on 68 senators and 295 House representatives. These huge majorities allowed Roosevelt and Johnson to function in a quasi-parliamentary manner, ignoring their partisan opposition in Congress and passing reforms representing compromise between the center and left of their own parties.

Finally, reformers have learned how to craft their proposals in ways that would not raise anti-statist hackles. Wilson, Roosevelt, and the Democrats in Nixon's first term targeted specific abuses of the market for regulation. They claimed to be *improving,* rather than limiting, the operation of the market. Wilson's Federal Trade Commission was billed as the means to promote market competition. Roosevelt replaced planning with regulation after the Supreme Court threw out the National Recovery Administration. And liberals promoted welfare measures, including old-age pensions and unemployment compensation, that were aimed at meeting public needs that the private market could not or would not meet. They were consistent with a mild strain of Lockean liberalism.

Obama took office promising a version of Roosevelt's first hundred days, and conditions were auspicious for major reform: The market had broken down to the extent that a second Great Depression loomed on the horizon; business was divided and demoralized; the public was ready to entertain drastic measures, even if they entailed an increase in governmental power; liberal and left-wing movements were invigorated by Obama's victory; and Obama and the Democrats enjoyed majorities in the House and the Senate.

Obama and the Democrats did get a stimulus bill through Congress, but getting the rest of their reform agenda has proven to be more difficult. A hundred days have given way to 200 and will soon give way to a year. What has held up their efforts at reform? The basic problem is that the economy, while not recovering, has stopped spiraling downward; public concern has begun to shift away from the failure of the market to the failure of government to revive the market. Ideological conservatism has reemerged with a vengeance.

According to the Pew poll, Americans who prefer "smaller government, fewer services" to "bigger government, more services" has risen from 42 percent in October 2008 to 48 percent this March to 51 percent at the beginning of October. In Gallup's surveys, conservatives now outnumber moderates as well as liberals for the first time since 2004—with the most important change being an increase in the percentages who think there is "too much government regulation."

Business and its Republican allies have also revived, and they have actively lobbied against Obama and the Democrats' reform agenda. America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), which led the fight against Clinton's health care bill in 1994, has taken the field; the American Financial Services Association is trying to eviscerate financial regulatory reform; the American Petroleum Institute is running ads against climate-change legislation; and conservative Republicans have organized "Tea Parties" to protest the Democratic agenda. Left-wing and liberal groups have countered these efforts and attacked moderate Democrats who, in the face of business pressure, have begun to waver. But, as yet, they lack the disruptive power of the movements of the 1930s or late '60s.

Support for specific liberal reforms persists and, in some instances, has even grown this fall. But, increasingly, that support has had to co-exist with a vibrant and unsettling ideological conservatism. Obama and the Democrats' opening for reform is not nearly as large as those enjoyed by Roosevelt or Johnson in their early years in office. That has put a premium on the political skill of Obama and the Democratic congressional leadership at deflecting criticism and outmaneuvering their opposition. They have performed well, but by no means perfectly.

To allay suspicions of statism, Obama and the Democrats have had to avoid the impression that they are advocating a federal takeover of the health care system, government planning to avert a climate crisis, and federal control of the banking system. And they have done their best to do so. In framing their proposals, Obama and the Democrats have opted for regulation rather than nationalization and for programs that supplement rather than replace what the market already does. When Republicans and business lobbies have attacked the public option in the Democrats' health care bill as a Trojan horse for a government takeover of insurance, Democrats have successfully framed it as an expansion rather than a constriction of free-market choice. In a *Washington Post* poll from October 18, respondents favored it by 57 percent to 40 percent. In a CNN poll conducted at the same time, respondents favored a public option by 61 percent to 38 percent.

The administration has also sought to divide business. It has wooed some hospital and drug firms to back its health plan; it has taken advantage of rifts between banks and investors to push its financial regulatory reform; and it has courted pro-green firms that back its climate bill. When Apple, Exelon, and other companies quit the U.S. Chamber of Commerce over that body's opposition to climate-change legislation, it was a major victory for the administration.

Where the Obama administration has stumbled is in handling the Republicans in Congress. In its eagerness to avoid attacks from business and conservative Republicans, and to win over the few Republican moderates, the White House has appeared willing to ditch significant parts of its reform program, including the public option from its health care bill and strict regulation of derivatives from its financial-reform proposal, even though these kinds of measures have remained popular among the public.

The White House has also mishandled liberal and left-wing movements when they have run ads against wayward Democrats who appeared unwilling to back the administration's reform agenda. Generally, the White House has tried to discourage them from taking positions independent of the administration's. And it has thrown its support to Organizing for America, a quasi-political machine that grew out of the campaign and that is united by its loyalty to Obama rather than by its support for liberal reform. That's a mistake. Obama and the Democrats need active, unruly, and independent pressure from the left to combat Republican conservatives, intimidate Democratic fence-sitters, and persuade business that, if it doesn't back Obama's reforms, it could face much more radical measures.

Still, with these exceptions, Obama and the Democratic leadership in Congress have done well under conditions that are not as favorable for reform as they seemed in January. Obama and the Democrats understand not only the opportunity for reform, but also the long-standing ideological obstacles they face in obtaining it, and they have adopted a strategy of dividing business and framing their proposals as market reforms. If they continue to do so, and if they are not scared off by pressure from the right, they should succeed in getting a health care bill and new financial regulations. A climate-change bill will be more difficult but not impossible, as long as they can keep the voting public focused on the specifics of liberal reform rather than the atmospherics of ideological conservatism. ◆

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The Goldstone Illusion

What the U.N. report gets wrong about Gaza—and war.

MOSHE HALBERTAL

I.

In 2000, I was asked by the Israel Defense Forces to join a group of philosophers, lawyers, and generals for the purpose of drafting the army's ethics code. Since then, I have been deeply involved in the analysis of the moral issues that Israel faces in its war on terrorism. I have spent many hours in discussions with soldiers and officers in order to better grasp the dilemmas that they tackle in the field, and in an attempt to help facilitate the internalization of the code of ethics in war. It was no wonder that, when the Goldstone Report on the Gaza war was published, I was keen to read it, with some hope of getting a perspective on Israeli successes or failures in this effort to comprehend war, and to fight it, morally. Unlike many who responded to the report, in praise or in blame, I gave this immensely long document a careful reading.

Let us begin with a sense of the moral stakes. Since the early 1990s, the nature of the military conflict facing Israel has been dramatically shifting. What was mainly a clash between states and armies has turned into a clash between a state and paramilitary terror organizations, Hamas in the south and Hezbollah in the north. This new form of struggle is now called "asymmetrical war." It is defined by an attempt on the part of those groups to erase two basic features of war: the front and the uniform. Hamas militants fight without military uniforms, in ordinary and undistinguishing civilian garb, taking shelter among their own civilian population; and they attack Israeli civilians wherever they are, intentionally and indiscriminately. During the Gaza operation, for example, some Hamas militants embedded in the civilian population did not carry weapons while moving from one position to another. Arms and ammunition had been pre-positioned for them and stored in different houses.

In addressing this vexing issue, the Goldstone Report uses a rather strange formulation: "While reports reviewed by the Mission credibly indicate that members of the Palestinian armed groups were not always dressed in a way that distinguished them from the civilians, the Mission found no evidence that Palestinian combatants mingled with the civilian population with the intention of shielding themselves from the attack." The reader of such a sentence might well wonder what its author means. Did Hamas militants not wear their uniforms because they were inconveniently at the laundry? What other reasons for wearing civilian clothes could they have had, if not for deliberately sheltering themselves among the civilians?

As for the new "front" in asymmetrical warfare, we read in another passage, which is typical of the report's overall biased tone, that, "On the basis of the information it gathered, the Mission finds that there are indications that Palestinian armed groups launched rockets from urban areas. The Mission has not been able to obtain any direct evidence that this was done with the specific intent of shielding the rocket launchers from counterstrikes by the Israeli armed forces." What reason could there possibly be for launching rockets from urban centers, if not shielding those rockets from counterattack? And what is the moral distinction that is purportedly being established here?

By disguising themselves as civilians and by attacking civilians with no uniforms and with no front, these paramilitary terrorist organizations attempt nothing less than to erase the distinction between combatants and noncombatants on both sides of the struggle. Suicide bombers exploded themselves on buses and in restaurants in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, Dimona, Eilat, and many other places. Qassam rockets and Katyushas were fired randomly at various Israeli civilian centers, as far as their range allowed. So the war had no defined place and was waged by unidentified murderers. It justifiably felt like a change in the very nature of warfare. The goal of this momentous transformation was to create a war of all against all and everywhere. It aimed at shifting the Israeli population from a healthy sense of cautious fear attached to a particular place—a border, a security zone—to a generalized panic that has no location. Everywhere and everyone is now regarded as dangerous. This is not paranoia. It has a basis in a new reality, and is the outcome of a new strategic paradigm.

Faced with this unprecedented and deeply perplexing situation, two extreme positions have emerged in Israel. The radical left claims that, since such a struggle necessarily involves the killing of innocent civilians, there is no justifiable way of fighting it. Soldiers ought to refuse to engage in such a war, and the government has only one option, which is to end the occupation. This view is wrong, since Israel has the right and the obligation to protect its citizens, and without providing real security, it will fail also to achieve peace and to put an end to the occupation. The radical right claims that, since Hamas and Hezbollah initiated the targeting of Israeli civilians, and since they take refuge among their own civilians, the responsibility for harming Palestinian civilians during Israel's attempt to defend itself falls upon the Palestinians exclusively. This approach is also wrong. The killing of our civilians does not justify the killing of their civilians. Civilians do not lose their right to life when they are used as shields by Hamas and Hezbollah. In fighting the militants, Israel must do as much as it possibly can do to avoid and minimize harm to civilian life and property.

The aim of the IDF ethics code is to strike a coherent and morally plausible position that provides Israel with the effective tools to protect its citizens and win the war while also setting the proper moral limits that have to be met while legitimately securing its citizens. In debating the code, I heard many times that it imposes constraints upon Israeli action that would limit the capacity of the army to win the battle and to provide security. In fact, the moral constraints and the strategic goals are mutually reinforcing. Radical groups such as Hamas start their struggle with little support from their population, which tends to be more moderate. They increase their base of support cynically, by murdering Israeli civilians and thereby goading Israel into an overreaction (this is not to deny, of course, that Israel can choose not to overreact) in a way that ends up causing suffering to the Palestinian civilians among whom the militants take shelter. The death and the suffering of the civilian Palestinian population, in the short run, is a part of the Hamas

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strategy, since it increases the sympathy of the population with the movement's aims. An Israeli overreaction also leads to the shattering of Israel's moral legitimacy in its own struggle. In a democratic society with a citizen's army, any erosion of the ethical foundation of its soldiers and its citizens is of immense political and strategic consequence.

And so, Israel's goal in its struggle with Hamas and Hezbollah is to reverse their attempt to strengthen themselves politically by means of their morally bankrupt strategy. Rather than being drawn into a war of all against all and everywhere, Israel has sought to isolate the militants from their environment: to mark them and "clothe" them with a uniform, and to force them to a definite front. The moral restraints in this case are of great strategic value. I am convinced, for this reason, that targeted killing, especially of the militants' leadership, is an effective and legitimate endeavor. It is for this same reason that I believe that Israel's siege of Gaza, and its harsh effect upon general civilian life, is morally problematic and strategically counterproductive.

II.

In accordance with the just war tradition in Western history and philosophy, three principles are articulated in the IDF code concerning moral behavior in war. The first is the principle of necessity. It requires that force be used solely for the purposes of accomplishing the mission. If, for example, a soldier has to break down the door of a home in order to search for a suspected terrorist, he has no right to smash the TV set on his way in: Such gratuitous use of force has no relation to the mission. This is a straightforward principle, professionally and morally, though its implementation might be complicated if the mission is not well-articulated or if there are serious arguments about what kind of force is necessary to accomplish a given mission. In ordinary war, the collapse of the enemy's army is a more or less clear event; but in an asymmetrical war, victory is never final—the mission seems not so much to end as to shift; and so it may be difficult to apply the necessity principle.

The second principle articulated in the code is the principle of distinction. It is an absolute prohibition on the intentional targeting of noncombatants. The intentional killing of innocent civilians is prohibited even in cases where such a policy might be effective in stopping terrorism. At the height of the violence in 2002, some suggested that the only deterrence against suicide bombers who wish to die anyway is the killing of their families. But such a policy is blatantly murderous, and it is prohibited. An Israeli soldier is prohibited from intentionally targeting noncombatants, and, in the event that he is given such an order, he must refuse it. He is obligated to engage in fighting only those who threaten his fellow soldiers and civilians.

The implementation of the principle of distinction is also very difficult in an asymmetrical war. Since the enemy does not appear in uniform and there is no specified zone that can be described as the battlefield, the question of who is a combatant becomes crucial. In the process of identifying combatants, a whole causal chain must be established and marked as a legitimate target. This "food chain" of terrorism is made up of people whose intentional actions, one after the other, will end up threatening Israeli civilians or soldiers. This chain includes the one who plans the attack, the one who recruits the bomber, the one who prepares the bomb, the driver of the car that transports the bomber to his or her target, and so on. It is clear that such an attempt gives rise to difficult cases, and even the most scrupulous effort will leave some room for doubt. What about the financer of the bombing, for example?

It is also clear that applying the international law of war to this new battlefield is fraught with problems. Consider a painful issue that comes up in the Goldstone Report—the matter of the Gaza police force. In the first minutes of the war, Israel targeted Hamas police, killing dozens. There is no question that, in an ordinary war, a police force that is dedicated to keeping the civilian peace is not a military target. The report therefore blames Israel for an intentional targeting of noncombatants. But such a charge is only valid concerning a war against a state with a clear and defined military institution, one that therefore practices a clear division of labor between the police and the army. What happens in semi-states that do not have an institutionalized army, whose armed forces are a militia loyal to the movement or party that seized power? In such situations, the police force might be just a way of putting combatants on the payroll of the state, while basically assigning them clear military roles. Israeli intelligence claims that it has clear proof that this was the case in Gaza. This is certainly something that Israel will have to clarify. But it is clear to me that Goldstone's accusation that targeting of the police forces automatically constitutes an attack on noncombatants represents a gross misunderstanding of the nature of such a conflict.

The third principle, the most difficult of all, is the principle of proportionality, or the principle of avoidance. Its subject is the situation in which, while targeting combatants, it is foreseeable that noncombatants will be killed collaterally. In such a case, a proportionality test has to be enacted, according to which the foreseeable collateral death of civilians will be proportionate to the military advantage that will be achieved by eliminating the target. If an enemy sniper is situated on a roof, and 60 civilians live under the roof, and the only way to kill the sniper is to bomb the roof, which is to say, bomb the house, such bombing is prohibited. The military advantage in eliminating the sniper is disproportionate to the probable cost of civilian life.

Hamas has transformed warfare by erasing the distinction between combatants and noncombatants.

In discussing the proportionality constraint, there emerges a natural pressure to provide an exact criterion for measuring the proper ratio between collateral deaths and military advantage. I must admit that I do not know the formula for such a precise calculation, and I do not believe that a clear-cut numerical rule can be established. Different people have different intuitions about strategic value and moral cost. And yet, the Israeli army has traditions and precedents that can be relied upon. In 2002, for example, Israel bombed the Gazan home of Salah Shehadeh, who was one of the main Hamas operatives responsible for the deaths of many Israeli civilians. Fourteen innocent people were killed along with Shehadeh. The Israeli chief of staff, Moshe Yaalon, claimed that the collateral deaths were not only unintentional, they were not even foreseeable. The innocent people who were killed lived in shacks in the backyard of the building, which, in aerial photographs, looked like storage units. Yaalon claimed that, had Israel known about this collateral harm, it would not have bombed Shehadeh's hiding place. It had already aborted such an operation a few times because of concern with

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foreseeable civilian death. I believe that such care is right. It is better to err on the side of over-cautiousness concerning collateral damage.

Besides the difficulties that are raised by the proportionality test, there is a far greater and more momentous issue at stake in the principle of avoidance. The IDF code states that soldiers have to do their utmost to avoid the harming of civilians. This principle states that it is not enough not to intend to kill civilians while attacking legitimate targets. A deliberate effort has to be made not to harm them. If such an active, positive effort to avoid civilian harm is not taken, in what serious way can the claim be made that the foreseeable death was unintended? After all, the death occurred, and could have been expected to occur. So the proper ammunition has to be chosen to minimize innocent deaths; and, if another opportunity is expected to arise for eliminating the target, the operation must be aborted or delayed. Civilians have to be warned ahead of time to move from the area of operation if this is possible, and units have to be well aware that they must operate with caution, even after warning has been given, since not all civilians are quick to move. A leaflet dropped from the sky warning of an attack does not matter to the people—the sick, the old, the poor—who are not immediately mobile.

In line with such principles, the Israeli Air Force developed the following tactic. Since Hamas hides its headquarters and ammunition storage facilities inside civilian residential areas, the Israeli army calls the residents' telephones or cell phones, asking them to move immediately out of the house because an attack is imminent. But Hamas, in reaction to such calls, brings the innocent residents up to the roof, so as to protect the target from an attack, knowing that, as a rule, the Israeli army films the target with an unmanned drone and will avoid attacking the civilians on the roof. In response to this tactic, Israel developed a missile that hits the roof without causing any actual harm in order to show the seriousness of its intention. The procedure, called "roof-knocking," causes the civilians to move away before the deadly attack.

It is rather a strange point in the Goldstone Report that this practice, which goes a long way to protect civilians, is actually criticized. Concerning such a practice, the report states that, "if this was meant as a warning shot, it has to be deemed reckless in the extreme." The truth is that this is an admirable and costly effort to avoid civilian collateral harm. As is true with many of its criticisms, the report does not state what the alternative should be. What should Israel do in such a case? Attack the house without calling on its residents to move, or attack it while they are gathered on the roof? Or maybe avoid attacks altogether, allowing the enemy to take effective shelter among civilians?

In the deliberations about the Israeli army's code of military conduct, a crucial question emerged in connection with the requirement that efforts be made to avoid harming civilians. For such efforts surely must include the expectation that soldiers assume some risk to their own lives in order to avoid causing the deaths of civilians. As far as I know, such an expectation is not demanded in international law—but it is demanded in Israel's military code, and this has always been its tradition. In Operation Defensive Shield in 2002, for example, Israeli army units faced a tough battle in the Jenin refugee camp. The army refused to opt for the easy military solution—aerial bombardment of the camp—because it would have resulted in many civilian deaths, and it elected instead to engage in house-to-house combat, losing 23 soldiers in the battle. This norm of taking risks with soldiers' lives in order to avoid civilian deaths came under criticism in Israel, but I believe that it is right. Innocent civilian lives are important enough to obligate such risks. And, if commanders are told that they do not have to assume such risk, then they will shoot at any suspicious person, which will result in widespread killing.

Yet the application of such norms in battle raises difficult moral quandaries. One of them comes up in the Goldstone Report. When the operation started, Hamas militants mostly avoided face-to-face battles with Israeli soldiers. They withdrew into the civilian heartland and fired mortar rockets from within their own population, targeting Israeli units. Mortar locations can be detected by radar, but the crew can move the mortar to a new location in a few minutes, and then fire from there. It is therefore impossible to target these mortars and their crews with a helicopter or in any other way that would provide a direct visual of the target and use accurate ammunition: Such means simply take too much time to deploy. The only option is to fire back with mortars that can be quickly and accurately directed at the coordinates of the mortars on the other side.

The problem with such a tactic is that such mortars are of 120 millimeter caliber and the radius of their hit is 50 meters. This means that collateral damage to civilians might occur while hitting the legitimate target. Of course, the commanding officer can choose not to fire back and put his soldiers at risk from the next rounds of mortar shots. It is important also to note that, when returning fire, the commanding officer cannot know whether there are civilians in that radius and how many of them are there. In "fog of war" conditions, and under pressure to react, such information is not available.

The Goldstone Report claims that the shooting of mortars caused disproportionate collateral harm, which is, of course, an empirical matter; but it is important to understand that this can be known only after the fact. So what to do? My own view is that, if the fire that the unit is taking is not accurate, and if the commander can move his own unit to another location, he should do so rather then fire back and endanger civilians. But this is a very difficult choice, and sometimes this choice might not be available. It is wrong to give the commanding officer a blank check to shoot anytime his soldiers are at probable risk—but he must be given the means of protecting them as well. The Goldstone Report is very critical about the firing of the Israeli mortars, but it does not take seriously into account the problems that such a situation imposes.

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It is my impression that the Israeli army in Gaza did not provide clear guidance on the matter of whether soldiers have to assume risk. Some units took risks in the Gaza in order to avoid the collateral killing of civilians, while some units accepted the policy of no risk to soldiers. This does not amount to a war crime, but it is a wrong policy. It also might be a cause of unnecessary civilian deaths: It could inspire a reason for a misguided order to shoot whoever crosses a certain line on the map in proximity to an Israeli unit. Given the fact that anyone in the battle zone could be a militant, and that warnings were given, such an order might make sense—and yet, the order should refer to someone who seems to pose a threat rather than to anyone who crosses the line, since fear and confusion might cause innocent civilians to move too close to the line and even to cross it.

These are not simple issues. They are also not political issues. They are the occasions of deep moral struggle, because they are matters of life and death. If you are looking for an understanding of these issues, or for guidance about them, in the Goldstone Report, you will not find it.

III.

In discussing the code of ethical conduct with Israeli officers, many times I encounter the following complaint: "Do you want to say that, before I open fire, I have to go through all these moral dilemmas and calculations? It will be completely paralyzing. Nobody can fight a war in such a straitjacket!" My answer to them is that the whole point of training is about performing well under pressure without succumbing to paralysis. This is the case with battlefields that have nothing to do with moral concerns. Do I attack from the right or from the left? How do I respond to this new tactic, or to that? And so on. This is why moral considerations have to be an essential part of military training. If there is no time for moral reflection in battle, then moral reflection must be accomplished before battle, and drilled into the soldiers who will have to answer for their actions after battle.

Besides the great difficulty of adjusting the norms of warfare—the principles of necessity, distinction, proportionality, and avoidance—to a non-traditional battlefield without uniforms and without a front, there is still another pedagogical challenge. In a traditional war, the difficult moral choices are made by the political elites and the high command, such as whether to bomb Dresden or to destroy Hiroshima. But in this new kind of micro-war, every soldier is a kind of commanding officer, a full moral and strategic agent. Every soldier must decide whether the individual standing before him in jeans and sneakers is a combatant or not. What sorts of risks must a soldier assume in order to avoid killing civilians while targeting a seeming combatant? The challenge is to make these rules part of the inner world of each soldier, and this takes more than just formulating the norms and the rules properly. It is for this reason that I looked to the Goldstone Report to learn whether these norms were in fact applied, and in what way Israeli soldiers did or did not succeed in internalizing and acting upon them.

The commission that wrote the report could have performed a great service if it had concentrated on gathering the testimonies from Gaza and assessing them critically, while acknowledging (as it failed to do) that they are partial and incomplete. This would have forced Israel to investigate various matters, provide answers, and take appropriate measures. (I do not imagine Hamas engaging in such an investigation of its own crimes. This is yet another asymmetry.) But instead the commission opted to add to its findings three unnecessary elements: the context of the history that led to the war; its assessment of Israel's strategic goals; and long sections on Israel's occupation of the West Bank. Why should a committee with a mandate to inquire into the operation in Gaza deal with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict at large?

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The honest reader of these sections cannot avoid the impression that their objective is to prepare a general indictment of Israel as a predatory state that is geared toward violating human rights all the time. It will naturally follow from such a premise that the Gaza operation was yet another instance of Israel's general wicked behavior. These long sections are the weakest, the most biased, and the most outrageous in this long document. They are nothing if not political. In Goldstone's account of the history that led to the war, for example, Hamas is basically described as a legitimate party that had the bad luck to clash with Israel. The bloody history of the movement—which, since the beginning of the Oslo accords, was determined to do everything in its power, including the massacre of civilians, to defeat the peace process—is not mentioned.

The Israeli reader who actually experienced the events at the time remembers vividly that Hamas terrorists murdered Israeli men, women, and children all over Israel while a peace process was underway. Hamas was doing all this in accordance with its religious ideology, which is committed to the destruction of Israel and is fueled by Iranian military and financial support. In the supposed context that the report analyzes, there is no mention of Hamas's role and its ideology as reflected in its extraordinary charter, which calls for the destruction of Israel and the genocidal killing of Jews. In its attempt to stop Hamas's vicious attacks on Israel's citizens, Israel built a long fence—an obstacle to prevent a suicide bomber in Kalkilya from rolling out of bed and driving to the heart of Kfar Saba and Netanya in five or ten minutes. (The distances between life and death are really that short.) The Goldstone Report mentions the fence, of course—but as a great violation of human rights, as motivated sheerly by predatory desires.

Hamas was responsible in many ways for torpedoing the next opportunity for ending Israel's occupation. After the collapse of the Oslo agreement, Ariel Sharon, then the prime minister, decided to withdraw unilaterally from Gaza, in the belief that there was no reliable partner on the Palestinian side and that Israel had to start putting an end to its control of the Palestinian population. Ehud Olmert, Sharon's successor, was elected on a platform that committed him to unilateral withdrawals from the West Bank. But the implementation of this policy of continued Israeli withdrawal was cut short by the unrelenting shelling of Israeli cities and villages from recently vacated Gaza. Such ongoing attacks made Israelis rightly concerned that an evacuation of the West Bank would expose Israel's population centers to such attacks, and the possibility of unilateral evacuation from the West Bank collapsed.

In the last ten years, Israel has withdrawn unilaterally from south Lebanon and Gaza. In both cases, the vacuum was filled by militant Islamic movements religiously committed to the destruction of Israel. Anyone who supports a peaceful two-state solution must ponder the role of Hamas in destroying such a prospect—and yet, quite astonishingly, nothing of this is mentioned in the Goldstone Report. It also avoids mentioning the legitimate concern of Israel about the ongoing rearmament of Hamas in Gaza, which supplies them with more lethal long-range missiles to wreak destruction on Israeli population centers. The commission should not have dealt with the context leading to the war; it should have concentrated on its mandate, which concerned only the Gaza operation. By setting its findings about the Gaza war in a greatly distorted description of the larger historical context, it makes it difficult for Israelis—even of the left, where I include myself—to take its findings seriously.

Then there is the report's conclusion concerning Israel's larger aims in the Gaza war. It claims that Israel's objective in Gaza was a direct and intentional attack on civilian infrastructure and lives: "In reviewing the above incidents the mission found in every case that the Israeli armed forces had carried out direct intentional strikes against civilians." In another statement, intentional destruction of property and attacks against civilians are lumped together: "Statements by political and military leaders prior to and during the military operations in Gaza leave little doubt that disproportionate destruction and violence against civilians were part of a deliberate policy." Now, there is a huge moral difference between the accusation that Israel did not do enough to minimize collateral civilian death and the claim that Israel targeted civilians intentionally. It might well be that Israel should have done more than it did to minimize collateral deaths—it is a harsh enough claim, and it deserves a thorough examination. But the claim that Israel intentionally targeted civilians as a policy of war is false and slanderous.

There are different accounts of the numbers of civilian deaths in Gaza, and of the ratio between civilian and militant deaths. B'Tselem, the reliable Israeli human rights organization, carefully examined names and lists of people who were killed and came up with the following ratio: Out of the 1,387 people killed in Gaza, for every militant that was killed, three civilians were killed. This ratio—1:3—holds if you include the police force among the civilians; but if you consider the police force as combatants, the ratio comes out to 2:3. There are 1.5 million people in Gaza and around 10,000 Hamas militants, so the ratio of militants to civilians is 1:150. If Israel targeted civilians intentionally, how on earth did it reduce such a ratio to 1:3 or 2:3?

The commission never asks that question, or an even more obvious one. In operating under such conditions—Gaza is an extremely densely populated area—is such a ratio a sign of reckless shooting and targeting? One way to think about this is to compare it with what other civilized armies achieve in the same sort of warfare. I do not have the exact numbers of the ratio of civilian to militant deaths in NATO's war in Afghanistan, but I doubt

The Goldstone Report offers no help in clarifying how Israel can legitimately defend its citizens.

that it has achieved such a ratio. Is it ten civilians to one combatant, or maybe 20 civilians to one combatant? From various accounts in the press, it certainly seems worse. The number of collateral deaths that are reported concerning the campaign to kill Baitullah Mehsud, one of the main Pakistani militant operatives, is also alarming: In 16 missile strikes in the various failed attempts at killing him, and in the one that eventually killed him (at his father-in-law's house, in the company of his family), between 207 and 321 people were killed. If such were the numbers in Israel in a case of targeted killing, its press and even its public opinion would have been in an uproar.

Besides the 500 civilians who were killed in the bombing of Serbia, how many militants were killed? The inaccurate high-altitude bombings in Serbia, carried out in a manner so as to protect NATO pilots, caused mainly civilian deaths. What would have been the ratio of deaths if NATO forces were fighting not in faraway Afghanistan, but while protecting European citizens from ongoing shelling next to its borders? And there are still more chilling comparisons. If accurate numbers were available from the

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wars by Russia in Chechnya, the ratio would have been far more devastating to the civilian population. Needless to say, the behavior of the Russian army in Chechnya should hardly serve as a standard for moral scrupulousness—but I cannot avoid adducing this example after reading that Russia voted in the United Nations for the adoption of the U.N. report on Gaza. (The other human rights luminaries who voted for the Goldstone Report include China and Pakistan.) So what would be a justified proportionality? The Goldstone Report never says. But we may safely conclude that, if the legal and moral standard is current European and American behavior in war, then Israel has done pretty well.

IV.

So a good deal of the outrage that has greeted the Goldstone Report is perfectly justified. And yet its sections devoted to the Gaza war do make claims and cite testimonies that no honest Israeli can ignore. They demand a thorough investigation, and I will enumerate them in their order of severity.

The worst testimonies are of civilian deaths, some of which sound like cold-blooded murders. In the report, such cases amount to a few individual incidents, and they call for criminal investigation of particular soldiers. Was there indeed a killing at close range of a mother and her three daughters carrying white flags? Then there are a few cases of alleged civilian deaths that are the result of the reckless use of firepower. The most disturbing of them is the testimony about the Al Samouni neighborhood in Gaza City, in which 21 members of a family were killed in an attack on a house. The place and the names are given in the report, and Israel will have to provide answers. Was it a mistake? Were some of the family members Hamas fighters? Did someone shoot at the soldiers from the house? Or was this an act of unjustified homicide?

The testimonies in the Goldstone Report are Palestinian testimonies. They were collected in Gaza, where the watchful eye of Hamas authorities always looms, rendering them vulnerable and partial. Israel chose not to cooperate with the commission, and so the Israeli version of events is not here. It was a mistake on Israel's part not to participate in the inquiry—though, after reading the report, I am more sympathetic to Israel's reluctance. This commission that describes its mission as fact-finding treats the missing Israeli testimonies as if they are Israel's problem, rather than a methodological and empirical shortcoming in the report itself. Whatever one thinks about Israel's refusal to cooperate, the Goldstone Report is still only 452 pages of mostly Palestinian testimony, and this grave limitation must be acknowledged.

Yet the allegations have now been made, and Israeli answers must be given. The next issue that Israel will have to deal with is the use of what the report calls "human shields," which seems to have been an Israeli practice on some occasions. In justifying such a practice, Israeli commanders claim that they forced Palestinian civilians to go to certain homes to warn other civilians before attacking the houses. This might be justified, but the testimonies sound different. They sound as if Israeli soldiers were using civilians to gather information. After attacking a certain building, a civilian was allegedly forced to go and check whether the Hamas militants were dead or not. This is a troubling testimony. Was this done, or not? If it was done, then it is in violation of Israel's own Supreme Court ruling on the matter of human shields.

Other testimonies pertain to the destruction of civilian property. One of the most disturbing is the report of the flattening with bulldozers of the chicken farm at Zeytoun, in which 31,000 chickens were killed. Such destruction, like other reported destructions of agricultural and industrial facilities, does not seem to serve any purpose. The accusation concerning the destruction of civilian property pertains as well to the large-scale destruction of homes. According to the commission, aerial photographs show that, of the total number of homes that were destroyed in two of the hardest-hit neighborhoods, about half were destroyed in the last three days of the operation. If so, then such destruction cannot be justified as in the heat of the battle. It was done to leave a brutal scar as proof of the Israeli presence, as immoral and illegal instruments of deterrence. If this were the case, then reparations should be made to the families whose homes were destroyed.

Next in order of severity comes the bombing of civilian infrastructure. According to the report, the Israeli Air Force bombed the flour mill, the water wells, and the sewage pipes in Gaza. It is possible that the flour mill was strategically located and was used as a perch for snipers or as a launching facility for Qassam rockets fired in the war. This would be the only justification for such a bombing. Israel should now provide its version of these events. If indeed these facilities were attacked as part of a premeditated policy, then this was wrong, and Israel should say so.

I do not see much substance in the complaint against Israel's bombing of the Hamas parliament and other offices while they were empty. A persuasive case can be made that an organization such as Hamas does not have a division of labor between its military and civilian functions. The report's long section on the attack on the prison in Gaza also seems to me a mistaken accusation. The commission notes that only one guard was killed in the bombing, but it blames Israel for endangering the prisoners in attacking a target that has no military use. It did not occur to the commission that Israel attacked the prison to allow Fatah prisoners to escape harsh treatment at the hands of Hamas. (The commission is well-aware that this was the population of the prison.) Some of them did escape, and some were subsequently shot by Hamas militants.

The Goldstone Report as a whole is a terrible document. It is biased and unfair. It offers no help in sorting out the real issues. What methods can Israel—and other countries in similar situations—legitimately apply in the defense of their citizens? To create standards of morality in war that leave a state without the means of legitimate self-protection is politically foolish and morally problematic; but real answers to these real problems cannot be found in the Goldstone Report. What should Israel do when Hezbollah's more lethal and accurate missiles strike the center of Tel Aviv, causing hundreds of civilian deaths? It is a well-known fact that these missiles are in Hezbollah's possession, and, when they are fired, it will be from populated villages in Lebanon.

It is important, for this reason, that Israel respond to the U.N. report by clarifying the principles that it operated upon in Gaza, thus exposing the limits and the prejudices of the report. A mere denunciation of the report will not suffice. Israel must establish an independent investigation into the concrete allegations that the report makes. By clearing up these issues, by refuting what can be refuted, and by admitting wrongs when wrongs were done, Israel can establish the legitimacy of its self-defense in the next round, as well as honestly deal with its own failures. ◆

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Stanley Kauffmann on Films

A PAINTING, A PORTRAIT

Peter Greenaway, the British director who was educated as a painter, first came to wide attention in 1982 with *The Draughtsman's Contract*, a silky comedy about seventeenth-century aristocrats. Greenaway then promptly set out not to build on this success, undertaking one eccentric film project after another. It was almost as if he were determined not to grow cumulatively, as most of the best directors have done. Of the Greenaway works that I have seen, only two of them—quite unlike each other—stand out in memory. *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover* was a modern comedy that revealed how sex can be achieved in restaurant restrooms. *Prospero's Books*, a slanted view of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, put the future in debt to Greenaway by preserving John Gielgud's exquisite reading of Prospero.

Now Greenaway turns to the Golden Age of Dutch painting. *Rembrandt's J'Accuse* is a study of that painter's most famous work, *The Night Watch*, and though it certainly *is* a study, it is also—or primarily—a fascinating film. Greenaway has a thesis, possibly stated previously in the mountain of publications about Rembrandt. The painting, familiar to millions, shows a group of civilian militiamen in Amsterdam rousing to an alarm. Greenaway's film sets out to prove that the painting is really an exposé of a murder—of one officer by another. Twenty points, all visual, are made to support this thesis.

He embeds his inquiry in an attractive style, decked with dramatized expeditions into Rembrandt's life, with scrutiny of details in the painting that makes us realize we have never looked carefully enough. In the low center of the screen through most of the picture is Greenaway himself, speaking about what we are seeing. He is always lucid and crisp, never didactic. Meanwhile, the screen keeps fragmenting around him into various shots of *Night Watch* details, or overriding him as we go back to Rembrandt's Amsterdam and the creation of this painting.

What is especially taking is that those inserts—can we say "flashbacks"?—are couched in the same light that we have all grown to love in that period. The cinematographer, Reinier van Brummelen, who has often worked with Greenaway, seems to understand what Rembrandt saw in the very idea of light. There are several sources of light in *The Night Watch*, not the usual single one, a matter that van Brummelen understands in his own work.

The murder thesis is too complicated to summarize, but here are a few of the details. A glove that is held by one man is for the wrong hand: he lacks a left glove, not the right-hand one that is shown. A weapon that another man grasps is held in a sort of penile position, and the shadow of another man's weapon falls across the first man's crotch. All the data may or may not support the murder thesis, but at least they adroitly parse the painting. In the event, however, one of the best proofs that Rembrandt was revealing a crime is circumstantial. After 1642, when this painting was made, his financial condition sharply worsened. He continued to paint some of the greatest of all paintings, but patronage fell far off. In 1642, when he was thirty-six, he was a successful artist and teacher; when he died in 1669, he was virtually a pauper. It certainly is arguable that the Amsterdam bourgeoisie punished him for his daring.

Questions remain that Greenaway doesn't raise. Why did Rembrandt do it? If he knew of a crime or suspected one, why, instead of reporting it, did he spend all that time and talent suggesting it in a painting—a huge one, too? And what did he do about the crime, or what was done to him besides the neglect, after the work was finished? Greenaway saith not. He merely puts forth his implications and inferences in a highly unusual, thoroughly intriguing film.

REMBRANDT'S J'ACCUSE
Film Forum

THE MAID
Elephant Eye Films

The Night Watch has had a weird physical history. In 1715 it was moved from one building in Amsterdam to another, and because its new space was smaller than the first, the picture was trimmed on all four sides. (A copy of the original exists.) In 1911 a visitor to the Rijksmuseum, where it hangs, attacked it with a pocket knife. In 1975 a man again attacked it with a knife. The second assailant, says David Freedberg in *The Power of Images*, directed his slashes at one of the figures who is prominent in Greenaway's story. Freedberg notes: "The man [the assailant] may have been completely beyond the pale, but he was not completely out of control." The connection with Greenaway's thesis is thin, but it exists.

How discomfiting it is to see a good film from a country that is low on any list of film-producing nations. *The Maid* is so good that it makes me uneasy because, as far as I can remember, it is the first picture I have seen from Chile. This apparently has been a neglect. True, the director and co-author Sebastián Silva had some of his film training in Canada and now lives in New York,

ANTHONY RUSSO

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but he began his training in Santiago and made both his feature films there.

His second, *The Maid*, co-written with Pedro Peirano, could hardly be more Chilean. Silva says he shot it in the house where he grew up in Santiago, and his younger brother Agustín apparently stands in for him as the late adolescent that he was at the time of the story. Nestled in these familiarities is an unusual account of a usual occurrence. The film begins as a story about a prosperous middle-class Santiago family—mother and father, twentyish daughter, teenage son, two small boys—who happen to have a live-in maid. We think we are in for a family tale. The focus shifts. The story is about the maid.

And there is a further shift, or realization, as the film progresses. When a story focuses on a person or persons whom we expected to be secondary—the valet in Harold Pinter's *The Servant*, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in Tom Stoppard's play and screenplay—we think that there is some plot-driven reason for the shift, some twist that we would have missed if we had concentrated on the principals. But Silva's point, which is quite daring, is not to disclose a plot twist but simply to view one of the usually ignored lives in a household. There are no dramatic surprises or cynical counterpoints in *The Maid*: it is simply an account of what it was like to be Raquel.

She has been with the family for twenty-three years: in fact, says the mother of the house, she arrived before their oldest child. Early in the film, they all celebrate Raquel's forty-first birthday, but Raquel is the one who celebrates it least. In the privacy of her room, we soon see that her life is bottled up in her, constrained. She loves the children and they love her; but she is no sweet domestic. Her outlets of feeling are in small tyrannies. She is jealous of her little domain of privileges, a bit bossy. Without presumption, she feels that being the maid there for so long bestows at least some emotional and executive rights on her.

One day, alone in the house, hurrying to answer the phone, she collapses. She pulls herself together in time to answer a second call. She tells no one. Not long after, however, she collapses again when there are family around. She recovers in a hospital, and the mother then insists on something that Raquel has long opposed—an assistant for her. (It's a good-sized house.) A Peruvian au pair girl is brought in, and Raquel soon makes her life so miserable that she quits. A tough old bird of a servant is then brought in, and after Raquel tries some of her tricks on her, the older woman quits, too. Then the mother brings in a woman almost Raquel's age who, so to speak, pacifies Raquel by understanding her. In time this third assistant leaves, too, for her own personal reasons, but changes have occurred.

Silva says that when he was the adolescent in this story, he used to wonder about the life so close to his family but quite separate from it that was going on under the same roof. This is hardly a new reaction, but the first of Silva's virtues is that he didn't dramatize—not much, anyway: he empathized. The result is not precisely exciting, but it has the pleasures of eavesdropping.

Most of the picture takes place within the house, and Silva uses it in a constantly cruising way that makes us feel like residents. Sergio Armstrong's camera is frequently handheld and keeps the picture limber. (There is, however, one zoom that is sheer movieness.) Catalina Saavedra gives Raquel an apt aggressiveness with the necessary tinge of pathos, and Mariana Loyola is entirely credible, which is saying something, as the warmhearted third assistant who does much for Raquel.

The easy competence of the whole cast makes us remember that, though Chile doesn't produce many films, it must have busy theater and television fields in order for such a corps of competent actors to be available. The same must be true of the craftsmen involved here. It is awesome to think of the many other countries, generally uncelebrated, where good film-making is probably going on of which we know little. This global ignorance of ours applies of course to all the arts, literature especially; but film, when it strikes home, surges so warmly that our loss of much of the world's work feels all the more frustrating. ◆

Sarah Williams Goldhagen on Architecture

PLACE OF GRACE

Over a decade ago, I trundled my good-natured family across miles of southern Switzerland to see every building I could by Peter Zumthor, who is this year's winner of the Pritzker Prize. Then as now, most of Zumthor's work was off the beaten track, not only literally but metaphorically, little known to the general public although admired by professionals. What drew me to make the trek to his work was what, from pictures, appeared to be its conceptual rigor, its unabashed monumentality, and an attention to detail so fanatical that every threshold, corner, and joint seemed to become an opportunity to rethink the way hands make buildings.

PETER ZUMTHOR

I bought a detailed map of Switzerland, on which I drew bright red circles around the names of obscure places: Haldenstein, the hillside enclave outside Chur where Zumthor lives and works; Sumvitg, the remote farming village where he built his first church, the Chapel of St. Benedict; Vals, the high-altitude hiking resort of his Thermal Baths. On our way back home we stopped in Paris, where we chanced upon a lovely American woman of wealth who was scouring Europe in search of an architect for a museum her family planned to build. We spoke about Zumthor's buildings with such earnest admiration that she determined to visit them herself. Across the café table went my map.

Ten days later, immersed again in the daily routines of our lives, we returned one afternoon to a message on our answering machine. "It's me," said a somewhat ethereal voice, the distance between us evident in the faintness of the predigital connection. "I'm at the Baths. I've been here for two days. I called because you're the only people I know who could possibly understand what I'm experiencing…." Our new friend's friends, like most people, had likely never heard of Zumthor. During her time at the Baths she came to appreciate why we had insisted upon the importance of this work. Even more than is the case with any building, comprehending one by Zumthor requires you to be there. Worlds unto themselves, Zumthor's buildings change your world. Pictures cannot show that. This man understands the difference between a building and a photograph, and he designs the former, not the latter.

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Zumthor is known to be uncompromising when it comes to his designs, and he exhibits his work rarely. He also tries to maintain an ethical orientation to design and practice, working mainly on public and institutional projects, and repeatedly turning down lucrative offers from developers and private clients. This reluctance to engage in many of the profession's customary practices and established rituals of self-promotion, combined with his contemplative and exacting approach to design and construction (which takes time and money), explains the lamentable scarcity of his realized projects, and why his work is not better known. Unlike most Pritzker winners, the list of Zumthor's completed buildings is short, and the list of his unbuilt projects is long.

Many of Zumthor's projects, from his Protective Housing for Roman Archaeological Ruins in Chur in 1986 to his recent Art Museum Kolumba in Cologne in 2007, reconsider the relationship of contemporary experience to historically rich and complicated events or institutions. In Chur, a complex of crate-like boxes woven from interlaced timber slats rest so lightly on the ground that the structures seem cast like nets atop a large excavated site of Roman ruins, conveying the ineffable fragility of present moments, as if all could be washed or bulldozed away before tomorrow morning. In Cologne, Zumthor constructed a museum for the Archdiocese around the remains of the gothic St. Kolumba Church, which, after its destruction in World War II, had become a large archaeological excavation site with ruins dating back to the seventh century, and was capped by a memorial chapel built in 1949 by the eminent German architect Gottfried Böhm. The dusty-brick museum wraps around and re-colonizing this historically laden site, creating from it an elegant exhibition space for artworks ranging from Romanesque sculpture to twentieth-century objects of daily use.

Zumthor's propensity to engage the past extends to one of architecture's most fraught challenges: honoring tragedy and loss through building, which is an essentially optimistic act. Such efforts include two projects in Norway, the museum of a long defunct zinc mine and a memorial to a seventeenth-century witch-burning (a collaboration with Louise Bourgeois), as well as the better-known Topography of Terror in Berlin, a documentation center on the site of the former SS and Gestapo headquarters, near the Potsdamer Platz. This last project became an eleven-year-long, almost Nordic saga: its spectacular design of thin, closely spaced concrete bars and glass panels was well under construction when the German federal government, which took over the project from the city of Berlin, balked—stories vary as to who was to blame for the escalating costs of construction and growing doubts about its desirability—and canceled the project, eventually razing the site.

All this hints at the character of Zumthor's work, but reveals nearly nothing of why it is so extraordinary. For that, a more analytical approach is needed, which must begin with his intellectual background. Zumthor, sixty-six years old, was born in Basel. The son of a furniture maker, he prepared to enter into the family profession. His early training was at the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule (ETH) in Basel, where a curriculum based on the Bauhaus' famous *Vorkurs* (which had been developed largely by the Hungarian sculptor László Moholy-Nagy) eschewed traditional methods of artistic composition to promote abstract experimentation with colors, materials, and forms. After Zumthor earned his degree from the ETH, he decided, in the mid-1960s, to spend time abroad, enrolling in the Pratt Institute in New York City to study industrial and interior design. "That nearly killed everything," he told me, explaining his dislike of how his chosen disciplines were taught, with an unreflective orientation toward commerce.

Salvation came in the person of Sibyl Moholy-Nagy (the widow of László, who had died in 1946), who was then teaching Pratt's courses in architectural history. At the time Moholy-Nagy was developing a hard-hitting critique of the Gropius-inspired strain of second-generation modernism, which was then American democracy's state style. Nearly a decade before her more celebrated colleague Bernard Rudofsky published the widely acclaimed *Architecture Without Architects* (1964), Moholy-Nagy ventured out in the field to study and photograph vernacular architecture in North America, Central America, and South America. Her *Native Genius in Anonymous Architecture*, which appeared in 1957, sang the architectural praises of so-called primitive and vernacular buildings, analyzing how they attended to dimensions of architectural experience that contemporary practitioners, she maintained, often neglected: the particularities of site and climate; the cultural resonance of local traditions; the associative and experiential power of materiality and traditional methods of construction.

Some of the buildings published in *Native Genius* share formal attributes with minimalist sculpture and land art, which Zumthor also came to appreciate during his time in New York. He was drawn to the works of Richard Serra, Robert Smithson and Michael Heizer, and later Robert Irwin. Different as these artists' works are, they exude a visceral monumentality not unlike what Moholy-Nagy promoted for architecture. Minimalist sculpture and land art also require a conceptually and physically active viewer: to understand these works, you must move around, considering their changeable and various aspects over time and space and culture. For Zumthor, contemporary art offered relief from the reification of technology into the quintessential symbol of modernity. His thinking ran counter to that of a heavily populated retinue of prominent modernists, led by their voluble mouthpiece, the Swiss-born critic Sigfried Giedion—postwar architecture's Clement Greenberg, and similarly monomaniacal.

Zumthor began to imagine art and spaces built up from everyday materials into a rigorously conceived universe of shifting scales and prospects, ensnaring the viewer into looking and thinking, looking and walking, looking and seeing, looking and touching, smelling, hearing, sensing. Back in Switzerland, he took a post in 1968 as the architect for the Department for the Preservation of Monuments in Graubünden, a canton in the eastern Alps, where he settled and has remained ever since. The rough equivalent of a position at the U.S. Historic American Buildings Survey, his job entailed researching and documenting the forms and the histories of vernacular buildings in exacting, even numbing detail. From this came one of his earliest commissions, St. Benedict in Sumvitg, a tiny high-altitude farming village whose inhabitants Zumthor met while working on some local structures.

St. Benedict, a church seating maybe twenty people, is a wooden sliver of a shiplike building, its prow pointing toward a postcard-ready snow-topped alpine landscape. Outside and in, the details of the building's construction—materials, joinery, structure—become the moments of its design. At ground level only a projecting door interrupts the wooden shingles of its exterior walls. Inside, a methodically articulated structural web is set in front, and independent of enclosing walls: the slightly pitched ceiling's unfinished wood beams land on exposed timber posts, which line the walls in tight succession; these land on exposed

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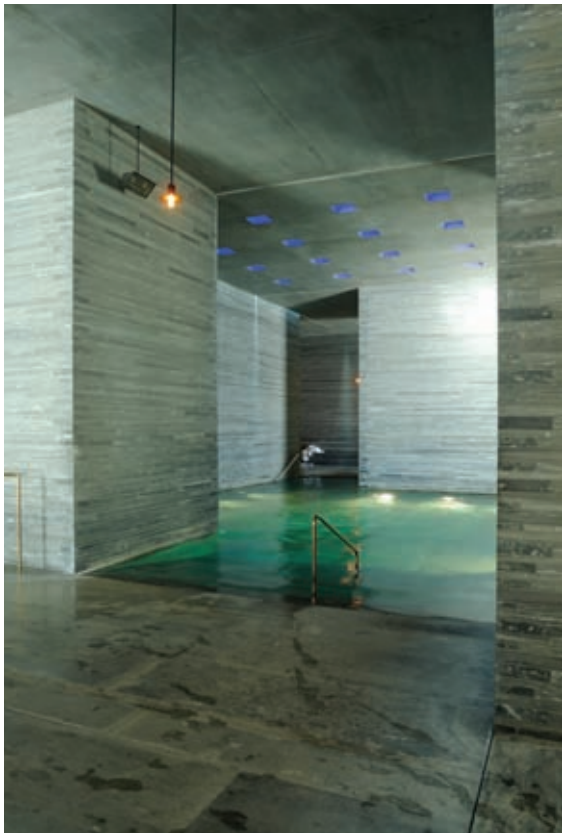
floor joists, which disappear under the exposed wooden planks of the floor. And the splendid, snow-capped peaks and shadowed valleys beyond? St. Benedict's parishioners see that view every day. Zumthor shuts it out, leaving only the majesty of daylight, which streams in from the clerestory directly below the ceiling. Here, this building whispers, in the passage of time marked by fallen light, in every material element and its joining, in all real human making, lies grace.

St. Benedict reveals Zumthor's sources of inspiration and prefigures themes that two decades hence he continues to explore. The stark, singular volume of the exterior recalls the planar expanses of Moholy-Nagy's Haitian forts and Serra's mute steel sculptures. St. Benedict's familiar and restricted array of materials operates on multiple levels, intimating Zumthor's subsequent compression of ever more layers of meaning into ostensibly simple forms. The wooden shingles operate on three levels. Functionally, they constitute a practical choice for exterior sheathing in a land of harsh winters, because they are inexpensive and can be replaced individually without disturbing the overall surface. Experientially, these shingles confer a palpable sense of a building's scale and means of construction: since they are so small—smaller than those on a typical shingled house—that the user can imagine grasping one in her hand. Visually and associatively, this sheathing integrates St. Benedict's unfamiliar form into Graubünden's picturesque but slightly ramshackle landscape of farmhouses and chicken coops, a respectful reference to the locale that bypasses mimicry and nostalgia.



Peter Zumthor, Thermal Baths, Vals

PICTURE-ALLIANCE

The thoroughly astonishing Thermal Baths in Vals is Zumthor's most famous and most revered building. Equaling St. Benedict in its stark monumentality, the Baths differs from its predecessor in almost every other dimension: scale (it is much larger), composition, organization, materials, construction methods, and relationship to site. Zumthor's buildings bear no signature style. In Vals, rising out of a steep, wildflower-covered slope is a rectangular stacked-granite monolith, punctuated by three differently sized square apertures arranged in a contrapuntal rhythm and variously open and glazed. The aesthetic, materials, and construction methods of the Thermal Baths are, as in St. Benedict, drawn from the building's surroundings, but in this case the referent is not architecture but nature. Interior and exterior walls, which sheath the building's concrete core, are stacked into place with elongated, thinly sliced slabs of volcanic granite gneiss quarried from a cliff less than a kilometer away. The elements of his architecture—strong forms, rigorous compositions, layered fluid spaces, a tightly controlled palette of materials, and explicit details—are orchestrated only *in situ*, with the particularities of the commission, the building's projected use, its role in the cityscape or landscape, and the historical and contemporary character of its site.

Entrance to the baths is by way of a subterranean corridor, accessed through the small 1960s-vintage hotel to which the monumental Baths is, technically speaking, an addition. This shadow-filled corridor leads into granite-clad locker rooms—nice, but unexceptional—and it is from these locker rooms that one passes into the *thermae*, a moment that steals breath away. Standing on top of the ramp leading to the water immerses you in pools of space and light of shimmering grandeur. The layered rock walls that outside rise from unmowed fields stretch here, uninterrupted, from floor to ceiling, containing the bluish-green rectangles and square fields of water spreading below, arranged with the same musical sense of complex rhythm that activates the facade. Narrow granite slabs seemingly extracted from the walls at regular intervals form steps leading into the mineral-rich waters. Floating here you catch occasional glimpses, through enormous square floor-to-ceiling windows, of the steep mountain slope across the narrow valley that uncannily seems to have cooperated with Zumthor's artistic sense of composition by laying out a picturesque scene of artemisia, narrow footpaths, and hand-built shepherd's huts. Aqua-stained light streams through tinted glass blocks, arranged in a grid pattern and set into the concrete ceiling. An otherworldly wash of daylight spills down the granite walls, emitted from glazed horizontal slats set into the edges of the ceiling.

The Thermal Baths are by turns austere, sublime, and playful. The glazed slats in the concrete ceiling make a mystery of what supports its large span; the answer is that not all the building's walls are load-bearing, and its ceilings are cantilevered off and anchored into supporting walls. The pools, each a different temperature, are lit from below; the warmest, secreted away, is also the smallest—barely larger than a California hot tub—and seemingly on fire, bathed in hot red light. Adjacent to the resting areas, are two little rooms of mindfulness, one devoted to sound, another to smell. In the Baths' largest pool, you enter indoors and end up outside, where you paddle about, taking in framed views of the hillside, listening to the underground spring water gushing in through three carefully placed spouts. Quietude reigns.

This taut, polyphonic symphony of stone, shadow, water, and light equals architecture's greatest places—take your pick: the Pantheon in Rome, the Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, the Alhambra in Granada, Le Corbusier's Notre Dame du Haut in Ronchamp, Louis Kahn's Parliament Building in Dhaka. Zumthor's Thermal Baths, like these other buildings, alter your understanding of what architecture can be while at the same time changing you. Kahn, justifying the vast expanses that he projected for his unbuilt Meeting Hall for the Salk Institute in La Jolla, once described the

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transformative power of great monumental buildings and spaces thus: "If you look at the Baths of Caracalla … we know that we can bathe just as well under an 8-foot ceiling as we can under a 150-foot ceiling, but I believe there's something about a 150-foot ceiling that makes a man a different kind of man." Woman or man, at the Thermal Baths, you do not simply take the waters. You engage in a profound ritual of cleansing and purification practiced by multitudes, in divergent cultures, over thousands of years, a ritual imbued with hosts of symbolic associations, contemplative transformations, and spiritual dimensions. Here moments and spaces lodge into your being, lasting memories of those scarce moments of beauty made by man.

The Thermal Baths, like St. Benedict, draws materials, forms, and methods of construction from its locale's built traditions and the site's topography, geography, and climate. Yet neither building melts into its surroundings, because the design of both, like all of Zumthor's projects, is guided by a rigorous, painstakingly formulated set of rules. "I like to believe," Zumthor explains, "there is an inner order to a well-made thing." His is an aesthetic that seeks internal formal unity. Rules underlie projects from their overall aspect to their smallest detail; rules direct the structure and the means of construction; rules govern the choice of materials, their relationship to one another, and their role in the overall composition. Yet never are these buildings arid, pedantic, or complacent. Once the rules for a project's design are settled—in the lumberyard-like maze of the Swiss pavilion for the Hannover Expo in 2000, the number of rules climbed to twenty-two—Zumthor loosens up. "My happiest moments," he jokes, "are when I can violate my own rules." Compositional surprises are many.

These buildings never feel formulaic, because, as in the minimalist sculpture that Zumthor appreciates, they become comprehensible only through motion and use. The brief for the Swiss pavilion, for example, in addition to the usual mandate of trade expositions to represent its commissioning country, specified a sustainable design. Zumthor's solution came when he remembered shopping for wood with his furniture-making father: "Let's build a lumberyard!" The precise lumberyard-like design of the "Swiss Sound Box," fresh-cut timber assembled with pressure springs instead of nails (dismantled at the end of the Expo, materials were returned to suppliers' retail shelves for sale), makes little sense from the exterior. The project unfolds slowly, as visitors ambulate through it as a maze, happening upon little bits of Swiss culture tucked away in its spaces: live music and dance performances, waiters offering fondue and bürli.

Zumthor's work addresses cultural debates that include but are not limited to architecture. Proponents of postmodernism who embrace *différence*, hybridity, liquidity, and other empirically suspect concepts of disjuncture and power imbalances are unmoved by Zumthor's rigor: to them, the search for an "inner order" or formal unity guided by rules reveals nostalgia, for the totalizing rationalism of the Enlightenment perhaps, or the hegemonic power of Western logocentrism. The Thermal Baths and other projects have been portrayed as one man's anachronistic, Lear-like railings against the world, soggy with yearning and standing in useless protest against contemporary life. It is true: other notable architects grapple more directly with the social and political issues that currently preoccupy us—global warming, globalization and cultural identity, the impact of digital and other kinds of imagery on our understanding of the world. Yet nothing in Zumthor's work is retrogressive or irrelevant. His architecture simply addresses something different, the actually existing moments of everyday life. He does not deny or reject the fast-paced and damaged world in which we live, and which we are attempting to better. Instead he celebrates the occasional human capacity in precisely such a world to make objects of exceptional clarity and rigor, and to create atmospheres and environments that can clarify, sharpen, and expand human consciousness.

Zumthor's thoroughly contemporary, urbane Kunsthaus in Bregenz, Austria, which was finished one year after the Thermal Baths, in 1997, lays to rest, or should, suspicions of anachronism or nostalgia. His office won the city's competition for a new museum of contemporary art because it alone offered a design solution that went beyond the object-in-a-field approach often used in contemporary museum architecture. The site's western perimeter fronts onto the boulevard edging Lake Constance, but its opposite elevation faces one of the city's busy downtown streets. Zumthor's design broke the program into two buildings in a functional composition that at the same time enhances the urbanity of the site. Art is exhibited in an ethereal, vitrine-clad, cubic, four-story structure. The museum's administrative offices, library, gift shop, and restaurant are housed in a two-story, dark-toned rectangular block.

It is a simple site plan, but it accomplishes much. Aggregating administrative offices, commercial displays, and café-laced areas of recuperation, and segregating them from the exhibition spaces, establishes for art a distinct domain. Placing the administrative block perpendicular to, and off to one side of, the museum, and designing it as a dark low-slung rectilinear block, establishes it as secondary to the spaces showing art, while at the same time using it to guide the viewer's eye toward the site's compositional climax. The city of Bregenz gained not only an art museum, but also a sensitively proportioned and now much-used plaza in a densely built and crowded part of the city.

It is partly owing to the influence of Zumthor's buildings and ideas that a younger generation of architects is reinvigorating modernism. Even within this context, however, Zumthor's approach is distinctive. Comparing his Kunsthaus exterior to ostensibly similar projects such as Herzog & de Meuron's de Young Museum in San Francisco and SANAA's New Museum in New York City makes this clear. All three buildings draw aesthetic punch from heightening the viewer's awareness of the thin line between inside and out. All three do so by employing skins that flirt with transparency and that highlight the materiality of their respective materials. Herzog & de Meuron, in the de Young, perforate copper with variable patterns to create surfaces which range from the nearly opaque, as in parts of the museum proper, to the eerily diaphanous, as in the museum's torqued tower. SANAA's New Museum is also wrapped in perforated metal, a light-gray anodized aluminum mesh, that reveals only the barest hint of the building's structure.

The Kunsthaus prefigures these highly acclaimed successors in that it, too, is entirely wrapped in a single material and permits no windowed apertures. Yet compressed into its translucent skin is layer upon layer of meaning and experience. This begins with its material, which is not a single perforated surface but frosted glass panels arranged in overlapping layers. These panels are multiply arresting. Cool, frosted glass is typically used in interiors, so its appearance on a multi-story public building sparks the viewer's curiosity and unexpectedly

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suggests a sense of domestic intimacy. And this glass comes not in large-scale plates, as one might expect in a glazed façade, but in torso-sized panels fastened to one another with metal clips, further establishing an immediate sense of bodily connection with the viewer. The effect is similar to the shingles of the much smaller St. Benedict: the panels confer upon the four-story building a human scale; their fastenings inspire the viewer to imagine how it was constructed. Finally, behind the Kunsthaus's exterior skin is more than just the foot-shuffling apparitions of restless users, as in the dramatically torqued tower of the de Young, and also more than stacked floorplates, as in the de Young and the New Museum. An interior staircase sits directly behind the Kunsthaus' main glass façade, and so veiled views are offered of the building's floor plates, of the connections between the floors, and of users' movements between floors as they make their way to and from the exhibition spaces within.

The Kunsthaus exterior sparks the viewer's associative experience of other interior and exterior spaces, as well as his or her phenomenological experience of putting together and using other objects and buildings. And yet the viewer also sees in the Kunsthaus an abstract, rigorously controlled composition, a dense rhythm of jagged breaks of stepping risers playing off overlapping edges of layered glass panels. Zumthor's aesthetic may have been in part inspired by minimalism, but this architecture is anything but minimalist, conceptually or aesthetically. Simple volumes and familiar materials are packed into compositions thick with meanings. How many contemporary buildings provoke one to ponder human movement as it marks the passing of time, the elements of nature and human fabrication that constitute the materials and craft of building, the construction of objects by hand and by machine, and, at last, the fragile and enduring value of human culture?

Poets, artists, writers, and filmmakers—the more honored shapers of our culture—sometimes evince a genuine interest in architecture; but its sequestering from the other arts, its functional and real-world dimensions, and the journeys required to see its most basic works discourage many from seeking out and exploring and pondering contemporary buildings as they would works in the other arts. Zumthor's buildings may be few, and some of them are tricky to get to. But you must go, go to see some of the great artworks of our time. ◆

Anthony T. Grafton

KINDLED

Reading electronically and the other way.

THE CASE FOR BOOKS: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE
By Robert Darnton
(Public Affairs, 218 pp., $23.95)

ON THE COMMERCE OF THINKING: OF BOOKS & BOOKSTORES
By Jean-Luc Nancy
Translated by David Wills
(Fordham University Press, 59 pp., $16)

I.

THE AIRPLANE RISES from the runway. Bent, folded, and spindled into the last seat in coach class—the one that doesn't really recline—I pull my Kindle out of the seat pocket in front of me, slide the little switch, and lose myself in Matthew Crawford's story of his passage from policy wonk to motorcycle mechanic. The gritty world of his workshop takes shape as I read. The airplane noise fades away, the pain in my cramped knees almost disappears, my eyes cease to blink. I am Kindled. It is by no means the first time. These days, in fact, I spend a lot of my time that way.

For the last few months, my Kindle has come with me pretty much everywhere: on research trips to Cambridge, London, Munich; to weekend conferences; even to lectures and movies, for the moments before they start. (So many books, so little time.) The one in my possession is the second-generation Kindle, not the big new DX that my hip colleagues have begun to pull out at meetings, their PDFs neatly readable on its 9.7" screen. But it is a neat little device—light, slender, as easy to hold for a long time as a small paperback—and it works very well. The battery charges quickly, which is more than I can sometimes say about myself, and then works for an astonishingly long time. Amazon's Kindle Shop, made accessible by Sprint, is only a click or two away, and downloading books and periodicals from it is quick and simple. And everything you need to do to move forwards and backwards through the texts, mark them up and store them, immediately becomes apparent. The device seems to arrive borne on clouds of ease and simplicity. When I took it to Britain, a single search on Google turned up a converter that enabled me to recharge it as easily in my dorm room at Trinity College Cambridge as at home.

The Kindle liberates you. Once you have it, you don't have to ransack the Fiction and Literature sections at airport bookshops, pulse fluttering and breath becoming shorter, as you face the prospect of an eight-hour flight with nothing but a laptop full of work to do (we addicts have a hard time with withdrawal). You don't have to break your back schlepping six books in case you run out of reading matter during a sleepless night in your hotel. You can even get the Homeland Security people to crack a smile and engage in conversation—at least if you carry your Kindle, as I do, inside a special book hollowed out for the purpose, and produce it when you undergo your screening. Any road warrior with a taste for reading will find the Kindle indispensable.

And it is not just a convenience. Via Kindle you can subscribe to newspapers and magazines, to websites and more. For almost two decades I have been addicted to the cultural pages of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Although it is a daily newspaper, it reviews an astonishing number of scholarly books. I don't know if German managers really care about the humanities, but they evidently like their newspaper to have a section that regularly offers thoughtful, elegant reviews of articles from scholarly journals—not something easily imaginable in an English-language newspaper or magazine aimed at a large public. The writing on art and architecture, science and music that appears every day is often outstanding. Reading the *FAZ* on its somewhat user-unfriendly website is a pain. Paper copies reach libraries late and out of order. But on my Kindle I receive the whole *FAZ*, on the day of publication, for less than fifty cents a copy, and keep up with a different intellectual and literary world. Francophiles can do the same with *Le Monde*.

Unfortunately, the Kindle is not this cosmopolitan in every respect. The Sprint network used by Kindle 2 does not work overseas, so during my stay in Britain I had to load up while I was on quick business trips home. But Amazon has announced a new version, which will use AT&T rather than Sprint for its

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downloading service. The new Kindle will be able to download books in a hundred countries—though from a smaller list than what is currently available to Kindle 2 users, and one shaped (how?) for each country's users. My backpack is about to become even lighter.

For all its wonders, the Kindle also gives the user plenty to complain about. The screen, unlike that of a netbook or a laptop, is not backlit. Instead it uses a display technology called electronic paper. Like normal paper, the electronic version reflects light. Even more astonishingly, once letters or images appear on the screen, electronic paper can retain them without using current. The Kindle screen remains readable, as computer screens aren't, in bright light (though not in the dark!). But the contrast between the letters and the background is not as sharp as that in a well-printed book. Kindling puts you in a grayscale world—and not the artistically appealing one of Hollywood movies of the 1930s. It has only one book font, Caecilia—though you can have it display your text in any of six sizes, whichever you find most comfortable. When the Kindle is off, the screen shows sharp and elegant portraits of writers, in a system of rotation by which Erasmus may follow Emily Dickinson. It's kitschy, but it's fun. When the device is on, however, its versions of line art and photos in books often seem grainy and unattractive. Large images and complex graphs and other graphics baffle it.

Open an old-fashioned book—a book published by Zone this year, or, even better, by Alfred A. Knopf thirty or forty years ago, or, better still, one printed by Aldo Manuzio a few hundred years before that—and you enter a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Traditionally, the typography and layout and illustrations of properly printed books were chosen by intelligent people to complement the text. A number of publishers still treat design as an integral part of a book. Kindle does not.

In *Double Fold*, Nicholson Baker pointed out that by microfilming newspapers, the great American libraries transformed the experience of reading them: they reduced the original pages, full of life and color, into dull black and white projections on a screen. Reading a Kindle is nowhere near as miserable as reading microfilm, but it is the same kind of sensory experience in a user-friendlier version: reading free of visual delight. You don't have to cite extreme examples—such as John Margolies's history of miniature golf, which came bound in artificial turf—to see that Kindle cannot replicate, for example, the physical pleasure inspired by the feel of Knopf's beloved deckle edges and the look of his preferred Granjon type.

Eventually, if the book is good, you find yourself, as you always did, transported into a different world. But you give up a lot of the incidental joys that used to accompany the trip. The idea that a book's design should add to the experience of reading it is not some novel creation of nineteenth-century aesthetes and bookmen. Back in the early seventeenth century, the great Protestant scholar Isaac Casaubon, who spent the happiest hours of his life reading in his study, reflected again and again in his diary on the *voluptas*, the pleasure, that he felt when he read everything from the Bible to contemporary travel accounts. Part of the fun, as he acknowledged, came from the physical forms of his books. When he read Maimonides's *Mishneh Torah*, a compendium of Jewish law, he was most interested in the structure and the content of the text; but he also showed a connoisseur's expert appreciation for the characteristically Jewish aesthetic of the architectural frontispiece at the start of the Venice edition that he used. Nobody would want to be George Eliot's Mr. Casaubon, but a lot of us would still like to emulate the real Casaubon and enjoy our texts in multiple ways. Alas, Kindle does not permit that. Future iterations will no doubt afford a wider choice of fonts and provide better graphics. But so far, e-book reading—like online shopping—requires a trade-off. The customer must give up tactile and visual pleasures in return for convenience. Not everyone will find this a good deal.

Still, the Kindle is clearly a success. According to Jeff Bezos, Amazon already "sells 48 Kindle copies for every 100 physical copies of books that it offers in both formats. Five months ago it was selling 35 Kindle copies per 100 physical versions." As new versions continue to appear and their prices continue to go down, Bezos expects electronic versions of books to outsell their dead-tree counterparts, and soon. Now that Kindle and Sony, Plastic Logic and Barnes & Noble are competing to offer better, cheaper readers—and downloadable Kindle readers in iPhones, and netbooks, and other devices that can be used for reading are proliferating—electronic reading will move from being one of the ways we access and consume texts to the dominant mode.

II.

What does the move from codex to Kindle mean? Will electronic reading kill the long, demanding novel and the deep, complex work of scholarship? Or—an even scarier thought—will it foster the vogue for vooks? (Vooks are hybrid works that combine text with video. They are to real books what PowerPoint presentations are to real lectures.) In search of help in thinking about the future that readers confront I turned, first, to a recent essay by the French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy. An expert on Hegel, Schelling, and Heidegger, an interlocutor of Bataille, Lacoue-Labarthe, and Derrida, Nancy is not the horror-inspiring hater of the humanities that those names will evoke in all too many readers. He loves books in the good old way, in all their gritty materiality: "the engraved and impressed characters now repeated in numerous copies on mobile supports, like those that preceded them, traced with a stylus and copied numerous times on skin, bark, or silk." But in the end, Nancy argues, books cannot be reduced to stable, material things. Born thanks to an author's feverish creative energy, texts shift endlessly in form and meaning as publishers and booksellers, critics and readers, respond to them.

Why not, then, welcome their electronic metamorphosis, which may make them even more mobile and provocative? Nancy's enthusiasm is infectious: he imagines the writer's fingers moving "like a piano a harpsichord an organ a harmonium or even xylophone or vibraphone in fact electronic music, yes, text becoming more musical more strident more sharp more penetrating more rapidly fleeing dissipating into the air. . . ." But more detailed predictions prove elusive. In the great tradition to which he belongs, Nancy soars above technical distinctions and cases in point. At times his marvelously strident verbal music seems at risk of disappearing into the air: "Indeed, the professorial, professional, or professing spoken word is divided in two, by means of a dehiscence that lies deep within and barely visible." Nothing was ever clarified by reference to a dehiscence.

Happily, a second Virgil has materialized on cue—one as passionate about books and as eloquent as Nancy, but a very different—and much less elusive—writer. Robert Darnton, master historian of the French Enlightenment, has spent his career as an observer of media and all their forms. For decades he mined one vast historical territory, the history of

ANTHONY RUSSO

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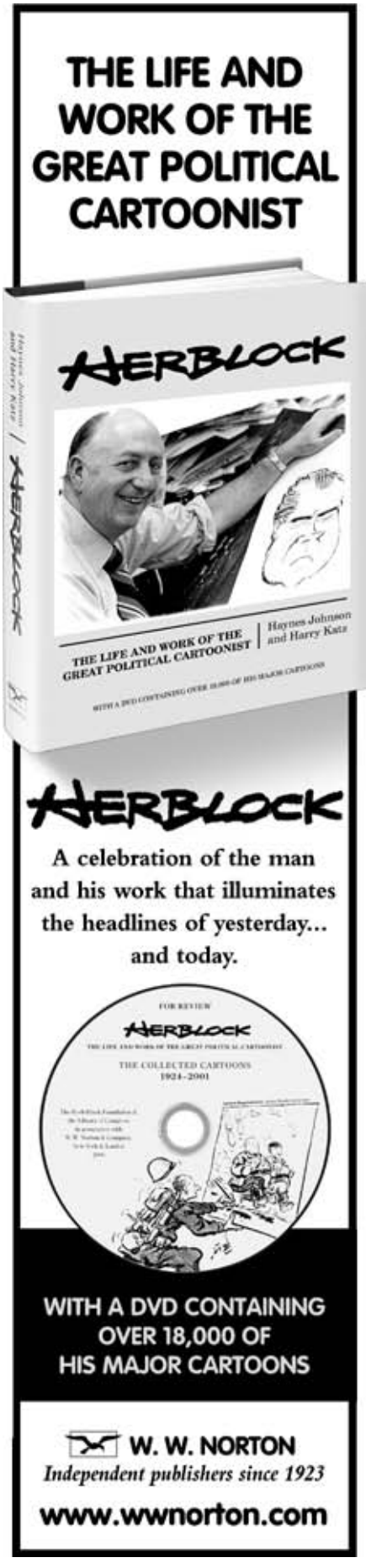
books in Enlightenment Europe, above all in France. No one knows more about how publishing worked or what it meant at a time when powerful writers and avid readers—think of Adams, Franklin, Jefferson—created the modern world. Moreover, Darnton is anything but a narrow specialist. Before he became a professor, he worked as a newspaperman, and he always treated the world of books as part of a larger communication system that included everything from pamphlets and broadsheets to songs and gossip—not to mention the public meetings that he witnessed in 1989, as East Germany collapsed, and on which he reported for this magazine. As a member of the boards of the Princeton and Oxford University Presses, he became an expert observer of contemporary scholarly publishing. And as president of the American Historical Association, he drew on the support of the Mellon Foundation to create a bold—if not wholly successful—experiment in publishing revised history dissertations as eBooks. By 2007, when Harvard invited Darnton to serve as University Librarian, in charge of the nation's (and the world's) greatest collection of strictly scholarly libraries, he had gained a unique and commanding view of texts of all kinds, and the transformations they are now undergoing as our information landscape dematerializes.

Several of the essays in Darnton's new book look to the past. As electronic storage and distribution of information moved from Vannevar Bush's imagined Memex to everyday reality, Minerva's owl took wing. Historians and literary scholars, bibliographers and librarians around the world realized more clearly than ever before that books have a rich history of their own. Darnton led this movement. He has done pioneering work on everything from the way books were printed and distributed in the eighteenth century—a subject he made his own thirty years ago with a classic book, *The Business of Enlightenment*, and has continued to explore—to the ways in which booksellers and readers dealt with the final products. He has also kept abreast of the work of specialists in half a dozen connected fields, from the bibliographers who have taught us how printers actually worked, to specialists on paper and how it was made, to the historians of reading who grub through endless commonplace books and marginalia in the hope of catching X reading Y and saying what it felt like to do so—and thus capturing the texture, feel, and meaning of one reader's evanescent, passionate contact with a text at a particular time and place.

The historical and historiographical essays collected here survey these fields briefly and lucidly, and are spiced with a few of Darnton's own discoveries. He has always had a detective's luck, as well as a detective's skill, in libraries and archives. Some of the most talented European historians now at work found their vocations when they read the startling passage in which Darnton, back in 1979, identified the particular eighteenth-century pressman, a certain Bonnemain, who left an inky thumb-mark on page 635 of volume fifteen of a copy of the quarto edition of Diderot's *Encyclopedia*. Here he tells a wonderful story about a sarcastic note of Melville's, in a copy of Emerson, which he discovered as a Harvard undergraduate in the Houghton Library. Emerson explained suffering away as transient, as something that blows over—like the storms which, he imagined, do not bother sailors. The young Darnton—who "thought the world in general was pretty rough"—relished the "caustic note" in which Melville exposed the sage as a Pollyanna, at least in part. And when he returned to it as a professor, he found that it was even snarkier than he had remembered: "To one who has weathered Cape Horn as a common sailor, what stuff all this is."

But the real subject of *The Case for Books* is less the distant past than the present and the future. Darnton continues to extract gold from his historical mines: he is about to publish a massive book on slander in old-regime France, and an even more massive e-book on eighteenth-century publishing. But in the first seven chapters of this book, he draws on his practical experience to tell us where we are, and where we are going. For the most part, he likes what he sees. In the eighteenth century, Darnton recalls, writers in many countries and traditions professed allegiance to a single imaginary body, which they named the Republic of Letters: "a realm with no police, no boundaries, and no inequalities other than those determined by talent," whose citizens were committed to making information flow freely. They loved to circumvent censorship so that "philosophical books" could reach print, cross borders, and thrill readers (often as much for their erotic qualities as for their arguments).

The real lives of eighteenth-century writers—as Darnton himself has shown—often fell short of these ideals. Established *philosophes* rarely, if ever, treated the impoverished hacks of Europe's Grub Streets as their equals. But the surge of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electronic media that we are now witnessing, Darnton argues, may finally bring their ideal Republic into real being. For the last generation and more, the traditional realms of information have experienced new and frightening pressures. Great libraries—those of American research universities, for example—have amassed mountains of printed material. But these collections have been accessible only to the small group lucky enough to have the keys to the kingdom: students, faculty, and others who can afford to pay for the privileges.

And even in their protected seclusion, the mountains of print began to suffer earthquakes and landslides. For-profit publishers jacked up the prices of scientific journals—some of them now cost $20,000 and more per year!—to the point where they ate up library budgets. Books continued to appear, of course, and usually each year saw more new titles than the year before; but libraries had less to spend on them. Even standard editions of the classics attracted few buyers outside the richest institutions. "Volume 1 of *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*," Darnton tells us, "published in 1959, sold 8,047 copies. Volume 33, published in 1997, sold 753 copies." Younger scholars and writers could hardly find publishers, much less an audience. Meanwhile the mass of print contained within the great stone and brick walls of the libraries represented a less and less complete approximation of the sum of human knowledge. Book knowledge began to seem like the whooping crane: a beautiful, threatened species that could survive only in a few secluded places.

Now a new media landscape has begun to take shape. Books are appearing in multiple forms: a printed one for traditional readers, an electronic version for users of the Kindle and the Sony Reader (which has its own good qualities, and gives its owner access to hundreds of thousands of books digitized by Google). Scholarly journals and trade magazines still exist, for the most part, on paper. More and more, though, readers read new articles when they first come out on screen, and find older articles not by leafing through volumes in the stacks but by searching on Google. Vast collections of older books, magazines, and documents have been digitized, and publishers are making it possible to have out-of-print titles from their backlists printed on demand in a few minutes on the Espresso Book Machine, which can print, bind, and trim a three-hundred-page book in less than five minutes, while the buyer waits. Meanwhile Google Books plans to obtain, digitize, and make available all of the world's books, in and out of print. It has already opened access to millions of them, in whole or in part, on every computer screen connected to the Internet.

These shifts in the tectonic plates that sustain the world of books have sent tremors everywhere. Lovers of the old ways cannot help feeling just a little melancholy to see that library reading rooms, which hummed and bustled in the 1960s and 1970s, are becoming bare ruined choirs, or to learn that university presses, the longtime homes of serious editors, careful refereeing, and craftsmanlike book production, often find it hard to sell even a few copies of a monograph that wins multiple prizes, and impossible to publish many valuable works of scholarship. Darnton notes that some of them have resorted to concentrating on midlist trade books and works of local interest. Such offerings may keep the presses alive, but they hardly deserve the help afforded by a tax exemption.

But these appearances, Darnton argues, deceive: it is not yet twilight in the realms of letters. Students and faculty and others are reading more than ever. They're just doing it at home and in cafés, online and in individual printouts, with Kindles and iPhones. Digital publication will enable young scholars and writers to put their works together in exactly the forms they prefer—and, in some cases, to see their creations go viral and reach far more readers than a conventional book would have done. Some further structural changes, most of which Darnton favors, could extend to the public as a whole the vast privilege of access that university members and those who work in great research libraries now enjoy, and vastly expand the impact of these changes.

Libraries and other research organizations, Darnton believes, have a duty to ensure that as wide a public as possible can enter and explore the new landscape. (Serving the public, after all, is the justification for the tax exemptions that they, too, enjoy.) Libraries can and should continue to buy books. But they should not see themselves as passive storehouses—statues that wait for Pygmalion-like readers to kiss them into life. Instead they should recognize that they are information centers, dedicated to giving their readers access to everything they may need, in electronic or print form as each case demands. And they should concentrate on communications, digitizing their own unique collections of books and documents—and, perhaps, the works of scholarship that presses can no longer afford to publish. (In fact, professional librarians have envisioned their task in these terms for a generation and more—sometimes all too literally, as libraries are swept clean of dirty old books to make room for flat screens and the kind of espresso machine that produces coffee.)

Harvard itself, as Darnton explains, is now engaged in a massive and imaginative effort to collect and make available vast segments of its immense holdings of photographs and pamphlets, blogs and Web pages. It has also enacted, with Darnton's ardent support, an Open Access initiative. All Harvard faculty must post their writings on a Web page, which will be accessible to readers around the world. (So it seems, at least. Puzzlingly, Darnton describes the program as mandatory but then explains that individual professors can opt out.) Thus readers who do not have access to a research library will still be able to read the scholarly and scientific work of a great faculty. In many ways, this is only fair, given the tax-free endowments and government grants that subsidize the professors' work. As other universities and research institutes follow suit, Harvard's new Office of Scholarly Communication "could point the way toward a digital commonwealth, in which ideas would flow freely in all directions."

Darnton hasn't drunk as much Kool-Aid as many other digital enthusiasts. He notes that Google's Book program, though he greatly admires it, will not in fact gobble up all the books in the world—and he proves the point with nicely chosen examples, mentioning unique books, from a libertine novel he turned up in the Library of Congress in Washington to a bunch of unknown pamphlets recently found in a desk drawer in Dublin, to which Google will not have access or give access in the foreseeable future. And he shows, from his own experience, that electronic publishing still has many pitfalls.

As president of the American Historical Association, Darnton won support from the Mellon Foundation for a program of prizes of $20,000 for dissertations, which would enable them to be published, in revised form, as e-books. The idea was to give young scholars more opportunities and, at the same time, to help find solutions for the space and budget problems afflicting libraries and the low sales of university presses. The dissertations chosen were excellent, and some of those that reached completion in the new form made deft and attractive use of its potential, including original

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documents and images and taking imaginative advantage of the electronic medium. But others remained largely conventional, and in many cases technical difficulties and problems in obtaining rights to reproduce documents and images prevented the projects from reaching completion. And sales, though sufficient to clear costs, were hardly brisk. Though the thirty-five completed Gutenberg-e projects are still available, the project as a whole clearly tried to do too much with too little—a circumstance that will certainly recur.

At times Darnton is a little more optimistic about the present and the future than I am. Thanks to Google, he writes, "it is now possible for anyone, anywhere, to view and download a digital copy of the 1871 edition of *Middlemarch* that is in the collection of the Bodleian Library at Oxford"; and he pooh-poohs the idea that occasional scanning errors or visible body parts diminish the larger value of what Google has wrought. In fact, as of October 8, 2009, it is possible for anyone who types "Eliot Middlemarch 1871" into Google Books to view and download parts 1 and 2 of the novel, which appeared in 1871; and for anyone who types in "Eliot Middlemarch 1872" to do the same for parts 5 and 6. But parts 3-4 and 7-8 are not to be found—a problem of quality that, as Geoffrey Nunberg has shown in a brilliant survey of Google's poor scans and scrambled metadata, is anything but isolated. And Darnton himself, as he makes clear, has come to believe that Google's growing dominance in the realm of digital books does not serve the public interest—not because the company is evil, but because it is acquiring too much power.

Darnton does not touch on—much less discuss at length—recent research that suggests that even students at elite institutions generally spend very short periods with online texts, not so much reading them as engaging in what the experts gingerly call "power skimming." This prospect worries those of us who now post as much assigned reading as we can in digital form, so as to spare student and family bankbooks and to conform to student habits. (These days most of them seem to do their class preparation after midnight, when the library may be shut, but the university website, like the Sailor's Arms, is always open.)

On the whole, though, Darnton's volume is an informed and realistic guide to life in the first age of digital media. It argues convincingly that digitalization will create—is already creating—a new kind of enlightenment, if not a new Enlightenment. One chapter is especially exciting. Darnton loves everything about the eighteenth-century books that he has studied for so long: their paper, their typography, their hand-stitched wrappers and bindings, their smell of elegant decay. He has a wonderful way of gathering dozens of anecdotes about how books were printed, stuffed into barrels, and carried across borders, and fusing them into a vividly human story. All this lively local detail calls up a world in which books (and bookmen) had a smell and a look of their own. This world seems very far from the shiny, uniform banks of computers that have marched into libraries, like the Cybermen in *Doctor Who*, and usurped so much of readers' attention—or indeed, from the neat but impersonal off-white Kindles that more and more people produce on planes.

Darnton believes that the new media will enable him to recreate the history of that vivid old world more effectively than he could ever have done in the past. In fact, imaginative collections of historical materials have been spreading on the Web for years, thanks to the work of pioneers such as the late Roy Rosenzweig and the support of some unexpected patrons. (The Library of Congress and the British Library, both of which are vast institutions and often unwieldy and averse to innovation, have been leaders in this field.) But Darnton has something even more ambitious in mind than the best Web exhibits and collections of research materials. For decades, he explains, he has worked his way through fantastically rich collections of documents in Neuchâtel and Paris, extracting thousands of nuggets of information about paper and ink, print and distribution—but every time he has tried to cast part of his results into prose as an article or a chapter, the mounds of information that he has collected have overwhelmed the story, making it unreadably dense and impossible to follow. In the e-book that he is now completing, by contrast, he can reconstruct his lost publishing world in many ways and on many levels. A single e-book can offer a general narrative, raise questions, and lay out documents in digital form or transcription or both to be used in answering them. Readers can move as they wish, up or down or across, tasting or swimming, seeing a song on a broadsheet or hearing it performed—with no loss of the sustained argument and rigor that characterized the codex book (as they characterized many books composed and transmitted in scrolls). In this project, the archive on which scholarship rests and the scholarship itself will be in dialogue, in a way that footnotes, illustrations, and text, the closest past equivalents, never could have been, and users will have freedoms that readers never did.

Darnton here offers a new vision of what humanistic scholarship might be in a digital world. It is ambitious, and some will therefore scoff. And real questions do arise. Constraints—the constraints imposed by a tradition or a medium—stimulate creativity. Writers who have only a limited space to fill learn how to condense. The thought of writers becoming kings of infinite digital space is a little scary. Word processing, zipless and easy, has already produced masses of inflated prose: an acquaintance who helps edit a literary magazine reported that submissions became something like 40 percent longer, but not 40 percent better, when authors moved from typewriters to PCs. Adding reams of poorly scanned and badly transcribed documents, or voice-overs that sound like one of David Wilson's parodies from the Museum of Jurassic Technology, will not improve sprawling, undisciplined texts.

Still, it is worth remembering that Darnton was one of the small group of historians, along with Carlo Ginzburg and Natalie Zemon Davis, who transformed everyone's idea of what a work of history can be in the 1970s and 1980s, when they devised the microhistory—then a stunning innovation, now an established genre. There were those who scorned it, but microhistory has proved its worth over and over again, as well as its ability to assume many different forms and colors. It seems entirely possible that Darnton will show scholars how we can make the digital world our servant, instead of accepting it as our master, and use it not to undermine but to complement the old powers of narrative and argument.

The digital world, as Darnton interprets it, offers us not a limitless future, but an exciting one. Meanwhile, though, back at the Amazon ranch, Darnton's brilliant prospectus inspires some doubts about the long-term future of the Kindle. Handy though it is, the Kindle gives access not to an endless world of flexible digital materials, but only to a weird selection of books that happen to be available. The great virtue of Amazon's main book departments, as everyone knows, is that you can enter an author's name, a title, or a subject and find exactly what you want, pretty quickly, in a virtual storehouse that embraces millions of titles.

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But the categories by which Amazon organizes books—the standard ones of the book trade—are far too indiscriminate, and too likely to promote confusion, to be good for browsing. The Kindle store uses the same categories—but they give access only to what seems an astonishingly random stock of titles, a textual swamp in which reprints, often bad ones, flank new books. Many major publishers do not yet sell any of their wares in the Kindle store, since they have not yet made their deals with Amazon. (University press books, which I and other scholars would love to have in electronic form and read on the Kindle, are only now coming on line; and Random House has not yet agreed to make its books available on the new international Kindle.)

The Kindle is terrific for downtime reading. I have enjoyed reading several new books that I would never have bought at full price or put on my material bookshelves, but that were easy to find and whiled away an hour or two. I am even more pleased to know that the complete Sherlock Holmes and several Dickens novels, which cost pennies, are always available (as they are, of course, on laptops and iPhones). The bigger version offers a good way to bring all your papers, once scanned and turned into PDFs, to meetings. But it is *not* a great way to read demanding or technical books.

An experiment at Princeton and other universities, in which some courses have put all of their readings on Kindle, has yet to arouse much enthusiasm on my campus. "I hate to sound like a Luddite, but this technology is a poor excuse of an academic tool," said one student who is taking part, as quoted in the *Daily Princetonian*. "It's clunky, slow, and a real pain to operate." He explained that "Much of my learning comes from a physical interaction with the text: bookmarks, highlights, page-tearing, sticky notes, and other marks representing the importance of certain passages—not to mention margin notes, where most of my paper ideas come from and interaction with the material occurs. All these things have been lost, and if not lost they're too slow to keep up with my thinking, and the 'features' have been rendered useless." There are readers—Adobe has an excellent one—that allow really efficient markup and search, but they are expensive, and they have to be used on a normal laptop or one of the increasingly popular miniature laptops known as netbooks. And by the unchanging laws of human nature, if twenty students in a class have their computers open, ten of them will be looking at the assignment—and the other ten will be checking their mail, messaging, Tweeting, surfing the Web, or playing Minesweeper. The Kindle does not offer these distractions, but for students and teachers working intensively together on a set text, it works far less well, so far, than books.

As a key to the digital realms that Darnton evokes, the Kindle is inferior to the simplest netbook. You cannot use it (as I can use my netbook) to access the millions of digitized books available at Google and elsewhere, or to soar up and down, as Darnton invites you to, in works actually created to take advantage of the digital form. I suspect that the Kindle will prove to be the Betamax to some other company's VHS (perhaps the legendary Apple tablet, with a Kindle reader built in?). Meantime, though, I am pleased to have it—and happy to think the reassuring thought that, endlessly inventive monkeys as we are, we will find ways to make the new media as rich and strange and complex as the old ones. ◆

Anne Applebaum
PORTENTS

REFLECTIONS ON THE REVOLUTION IN EUROPE: IMMIGRATION, ISLAM, AND THE WEST
By Christopher Caldwell
(Doubleday, 422 pp., $30)

As its subtitle makes clear, this is a book about immigration, Islam, and the West. But at the same time this is also a book about a particular moral culture, a set of attitudes, habits, and beliefs that has developed in Western Europe over the past sixty years. There isn't a good shorthand way to describe this moral culture. Sometimes it is called "political correctness," though politics as such does not define it. Sometimes it is called "the culture of tolerance," though at times it is not tolerant at all. Christopher Caldwell mostly winds up calling it the "European project," which is not bad, since it implies that it is something that Europe is still building, an ongoing but incomplete enterprise, a "project" for the future.

The focus on the future is correct, for the source of these attitudes, habits, and beliefs—the European mentality that is Caldwell's subject—is a deep desire both to forget and to atone for the past. At the heart of the European project lies a set of memories: of the vast physical destruction left in the wake of World War II, of the cycles of hatred and violence that followed the Nazi invasion of most of the continent, of the tyrannies of communism, and above all of the Holocaust. The primary task of this project is to purge these memories. This may be done in two ways: by rejecting anything reminiscent of traditional nationalism and traditional religion, and by promoting a halcyon form of cultural relativism. Early in his book, Caldwell explains:

> The war supplied European thinkers with all their moral categories and benchmarks, whether the issue at hand was the progress of civilization, criteria for ethical statesmanship, or rationales for military intervention. Avoiding another European explosion meant, above all, purging Europe's individual countries of nationalism, with "nationalism" understood to include all vestiges of racism, militarism, and cultural chauvinism—but also patriotism, pride, and unseemly competitiveness. The singing of national anthems and the waving of national flags became, in some countries, the province only of skinheads and soccer hooligans.

Raymond Aron inquired into the same phenomenon back in the 1970s, observing that Europeans "would like to exit from history, from *la grande histoire*, from the history that is written in letters of blood." The most obvious achievement of this project, the European Union itself, is explicitly designed to do just that. Indeed, it is no accident that among the EU's original founders—Germany, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy—were nations whose elites felt deep guilt about their wartime aggression or collaboration. For some, the sacrifice of a part of their sovereignty seemed a small price to pay for the chance to become "European" instead of, say, "German."

Caldwell is not the first to describe this culture, though he does so in a blessedly objective way—his interest, he says, is "neither to defend it as common sense nor to reject it as claptrap," and his book

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lives up to this stringent standard. This is important, in this context. For many of the arguments about Islam in Europe are really arguments about the European project—and about racism, militarism, cultural chauvinism, patriotism, pride, and competitiveness—which is why they often become so quickly inflamed. Frequently they deteriorate into name-calling, as one side accuses the other of different forms of fascism. I am not sure that Caldwell has avoided all of the pitfalls of this difficult debate, but at least he has tried to do so. This is a book written in good faith.

What does all this have to do with Islam? Quite a lot, as it turns out. Caldwell's central argument is that the European project, which was never designed with immigration in mind, let alone Muslim immigration, became the foundation upon which millions of Muslims came to live permanently in Europe. Certainly the European project shaped the conditions under which Muslims and others were initially invited to the continent. In the past this would not have happened, if only because immigration officials would never have allowed so many people, and certainly not from such foreign cultures, to settle permanently in their countries. In postwar Europe, however, bureaucrats did not allow themselves to take into account cultural differences, even when considering immigration requests in large numbers: cultural differences were not supposed to matter anymore, because that way lies fascism and its corpses.

Postwar guilt was also closely related to post-colonial guilt, and post-colonial guilt was the reason why some countries, notably France and Britain, initially opened their doors so widely to Algerians, Tunisians, Bangladeshis, and Pakistanis, among others. Surely, the argument went, their former imperial rulers owed something to the inhabitants of the British Commonwealth and the Francophone world. This argument even worked in countries that had never possessed any colonies, as all immigrants coming from ex-colonial countries were automatically classed as members of oppressed cultures who deserved the assistance of modern, anti-racist, anti-colonial, secular Europeans. In this sense, the postwar European project represented an admirable attempt to transcend Europe's old and ugly anxieties about sameness and otherness. The European project also nurtured an admirable instinct to welcome asylum-seekers—people who had a justifiable fear of persecution in their own countries. Some European Jews had been saved during the war, after all, because they had successfully sought asylum elsewhere—and many had died because they had been refused.

Over time, however, European enthusiasm for the offering of asylum was dampened by the exponential expansion in numbers of asylum seekers, not all of whom, as it turned out, were truly suffering from political persecution. Still, the real problem for European immigration services was never the "bogus asylum-seekers," as the British tabloids call them, but the real ones. At the end of 2008, the United Nations High Commission on Refugees counted more than sixteen million legitimate refugees, all of whom technically have a right to European asylum. Particularly when the humanitarian need to reunite them with their spouses, parents, and children is taken into account, along with the need to make amends for colonial cruelty, this is potentially a very large number of people.

Indeed, a very large number of people—in fact, an unprecedented number—arrived, and are still arriving. Some 1.5 million of the nine million people who live in Sweden are immigrants or the children of immigrants, as are some three million of the sixteen million inhabitants of the Netherlands. At current rates, one-quarter to one-third of the population of most Western European countries will be of non-European origin by the middle of this century. In many major cities—Rotterdam, Marseille, Leicester—Muslims may soon be in the majority. In some districts of major cities, including London and Amsterdam, they already are.

Once the immigrants had arrived, the complicated morality of the European project also made it hard, rather paradoxically, for Europeans to absorb the newcomers, especially those from the Muslim world. Europeans who were trying to abandon their own national identities were not going to thrust those identities on immigrants. After all, who was to say whose culture was better? No one saw the need to promote assimilation—to teach Turks to be German, or Moroccans to be Dutch. The very idea was embarrassing. Strangely, in retrospect, very few Europeans even felt that it was necessary to induct newcomers into the European project itself. No one explained to them that being "Dutch" now meant respecting womens' rights, or that being "German" was incompatible with Holocaust denial, or that open distaste for homosexuals would be considered socially unacceptable. No one felt comfortable inflicting any moral or historical lessons upon them at all. This led to a great deal of mutual incomprehension. As Caldwell writes,

> Just because they were migrating to Europe did not mean immigrants accepted, understood, or even noticed the European project to leave behind "the history written in letters of blood." On the contrary, many immigrants, and many children and grandchildren of immigrants, considered it a duty to shout from the rooftops their wish for a Palestinian state or a Kurdish homeland or an Islamist Algeria. They kept alive dreams of cultural, national, and even racial glory that were beyond the reach of Europeans' universalism because they were beyond the reach of Europeans' understanding. The misunderstanding was mutual.

Worse, when some European governments belatedly came to the conclusion that they would have to make active efforts to assimilate their immigrants, they often found that it was too late. The immigrant communities had taken the rhetoric about cultural relativism to heart, and immediately perceived any such efforts as "racist." When David Blunkett, the British home secretary in the late 1990s, began for the first time to criticize the practice of forced marriages among some British Asians and to advocate the mandatory teaching of English, his remarks were considered biased and beyond the pale. Shahid Malik, a former member of the British Commission for Racial Equality, accused him of "unsettling hundreds of thousands of non-white Britons." Blunkett's remarks, Malik said, "felt like a kick in the teeth."

But if the immigrants were not going to be German or Dutch or British, but were no longer Turkish or Moroccan or Pakistani, what were they going to be? The answer, as it turned out, was that many of them were going to live in ghettos, where their identity as "Muslims" would matter far more to them than it might ever have done in their country of origin, and where many of them would begin to practice the politics of fundamentalism. Finding the fuzziness of the European project unappealing, they returned to—or, among the young, discovered—their Islamic roots. And here is the tragedy of the story: for all its well-meaning secular earnestness, for all its determination to avoid the mistakes of the past, the European project wound up creating an angry and alienated religious minority where none had existed before.

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Caldwell's account of how we got to where we are today is elegant and accurate, and I am sorry to simplify some of his arguments here. His discussion of the continually evolving explanations that European politicians have given their countrymen about the necessity of maintaining a continually growing immigrant population—the explanations are sometimes economic, sometimes moral, sometimes gastronomic—is particularly splendid. He also goes through many familiar controversies—veils, cartoons, the interpretation of September 11—adding both amusing and telling details to all of them. There is a lot of hypocrisy in the debate about the growth of Islamic fundamentalism in Europe, and he exposes all of it.

I suspect, though, that the strongest objections to Caldwell's book are not going to lie in his description of the *status quo ante*, but in his discussion of "where we go from here." For the essence of the second part of his argument—stripped, again, of Caldwell's subtleties—is not merely that European Islam is now incompatible with European culture, but that it always will be. Having explained why no efforts at assimilation were made in the 1960s and 1970s, and why such efforts are not succeeding now, he goes on to predict that they will never work at all. This line of argument is aimed directly at those Europeans and Americans who have fondly and naïvely placed their hopes in "moderate Islam," and who assume that Islam will eventually evolve into something more compatible with contemporary secular Europe—something, perhaps, like European Christianity, which in fact plays only a minor role in public life.

Caldwell's is a complicated argument, with both religious and social elements, not all of which I am qualified to judge. Among other things, he notes that Muslim dislike of European attitudes to women and sex leads Muslim men—even second-generation Muslim men—to import wives from their home countries. The imported wives, who often do not speak European languages, in turn tend to preserve the customs of the home countries in their adopted countries for another generation. He also observes a phenomenon that historians of American immigration would certainly recognize: in practice, contact with European culture has tended to make Muslims more conservative, not more liberal, about the culture they remember from the past. Their children and grandchildren, meanwhile, are able to keep in touch with that culture in a way that previous generations never could, through the easily manipulated world of satellite television. Back in Bangladesh, young people may long to be "modern" and go to nightclubs, but in the Bangladeshi enclaves of London, one sees a much different sort of Islamic world on Al Jazeera. As Fouad Ajami recently remarked, in connection with Caldwell's book,

> In its original habitat, there could be an honest reckoning with Islam. Men and women could wrestle with the limits it places on them; they would weigh, in that timeless manner, the balance between fidelity to the faith and the yearning for freedom. But it isn't easy in Amsterdam or Stockholm. There, the faith is identity, and the faith is complete and sharpened like a weapon.

Caldwell also analyzes the writings of Tariq Ramadan, the Islamic philosopher often hailed for his advocacy of "European Islam." Although Ramadan does speak of finding ways for the two cultures to become compatible, Caldwell believes that he means something different from what many of his admirers think he means. In Caldwell's reading, Ramadan argues that Islam will be a force for the purification of a spiritually bankrupt and materialist civilization. The cultures will thus one day become compatible—because Islam has changed Europe, and not the other way around.

In different places in different ways, this transformation of Europe is already under way, made more difficult by the fact that the rules of the European project make the discussion of this fact taboo. When the Danes decided that they wanted to limit the ability of Muslim immigrants to import wives from abroad, they passed a law making it difficult for any Danish citizen to marry anyone from outside the EU. The law did indeed reduce the number of immigrants entering the country by marriage. It also stripped all Danes of some of their historic civil liberties.

France's notorious decision to ban headscarves in schools followed a similar pattern. The decision was taken because authorities feared that the veil was becoming a symbol of an international political movement. But in order to avoid accusations of racism—in free societies, it is not easy to ban a scrap of cloth—they banned not only headscarves but other religious symbols as well, including "large crucifixes," whatever that means, and yarmulkes. "Again," writes Caldwell, "over the long term, the price of managing immigration is paid by the broader society in the form of rights. Jews attending violent public schools may have considered the loss of the right to wear a yarmulke a small price to pay for some sign of state action against the Islamization of institutions.... The non-Muslim public understood that this was the best deal it was likely to get."

And now, of course, a real fear of immigrant violence—as witnessed in Madrid, London, Berlin, and Paris in recent years—plays a role as well. A Berlin opera house set off a passionate debate a few years ago when it decided to cancel a performance for fear of terrorism. The director had decided to illustrate the "death of the Gods" by placing the heads of Jesus, Buddha, Poseidon and, yes, Muhammad in the final scene. This was not political correctness, it was fear. (The same was true, incidentally, of Yale University's recent decision to omit the offending images from a book about the controversy over Danish cartoons.) If police are afraid to enter certain parts of Paris or Birmingham, it follows that the people who live in those areas are going to feel less pressure to assimilate over time, not more. Second-generation, even third-generation

Whorl

Then I spoke into the whorl of your ear
isn't this love oh my warlock my lord
would you call this a war or a quarrel

all those hard words heard in my ears
our word hoard is harder than a hatchet
heavier than a heart on the warpath

I didn't say you whored me no not that
I can hear you whooping in the love war
the warping of our words on the field of war

how will you have me if I will have you
how will you let me if I will let you
touching my forehead and my temple

fingering my forelock as you touch my skin
I wonder if a whisper is warranted
Will you hear me if I speak in low tones

a hue and cry will you hear me if I cry
here here I mean will you have me here
linking the place with the sound of the word

with the love hoard heard in your ear
this is love isn't it a war in your ear
love love a word in the whorl of your ear

SARAH ARVIO

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immigrants are growing up far more radical than their parents.

In effect, Caldwell is saying that things are bad, and they are going to get worse, and there is nothing to be done about it. He does hint that it might help if Europeans went back to their Judeo-Christian roots, and became more robust about religion. He suggests that a more unified European approach might help. He implies that Europeans ought to think about having more children. But since neither a revived Christianity, nor European unity, nor a demographic boom, is in the cards, the logic of the situation seems unalterable: "When an insecure, malleable, relativistic culture meets a culture that is anchored, confident, and strengthened by common doctrines, it is generally the former that changes to suit the latter."

Perhaps because I belong to the group of people who fondly and naïvely imagine that Islam may evolve—every other monotheism has—I am not entirely persuaded by Caldwell's elegant pessimism. There are multiple examples—many multiples of examples—of Muslim immigrants who have integrated seamlessly into Europe. I am thinking of the secular and sophisticated Iranians of Paris, the Pakistani shopkeepers on British high streets, even individuals such as Ayaan Hirsi Ali, one of Europe's most fervent exponents of Enlightenment values. All have succeeded because some elements of European life—the entrepreneurial tradition and the blandishments of capitalism; the cosmopolitan cultural scene; the large role given to public intellectuals, particularly those who have something new to say—are well suited to the absorption and the cultural adaptation of outsiders. I do not see why Muslim immigrants will remain magically immune to all the integrationist influences that have shaped other immigrants into contented citizens of Western societies.

There are also some historical precedents. As noted above, the habit of importing spouses from the old country was also practiced by American immigrants—Jewish, German, Irish—some of whom also remained isolated in their own communities into two, three, or more generations. But these groups were finally integrated, partly through the lure of prosperity—in the end you had to speak English in order to get on—and partly through schools and peer pressure. Caldwell is right when he notes that Europeans always underestimate how deeply conformist American society is, and how much overt pressure there has always been to assimilate; but it is not impossible to imagine that a few changes in Europe could make a big difference. Indeed, that ban on the veil in schools in France is now widely perceived as an enormous success, precisely because it has tended to accelerate the assimilation of Muslim girls (and thus it might eventually be possible to drop it). Nor is it impossible to imagine that Europe could recover from the current recession—from which, with the exception of Britain and Ireland, it has suffered less drastically than the United States—and that a subsequent burst of economic growth could pull immigrants into the mainstream.

At times Caldwell underestimates the power of the European project itself, which for all its frequent stupidity, hypocrisy, and fluffiness does have some cultural and even moral attractions. The very mildness of modern Europe, the absence of extremes, the irony and the distance from national symbols, the low-key and humble attitude to the past: all of this has an appeal. And over time, as the consequences of rampant ethnic and religious passion become clearer, that appeal may grow. It is true that Christianity in Europe is anemic, and it is possible that a religious revival might be good for the souls of many Europeans. But I am not so sure it would be a useful "response" to Muslim immigration. Who wants a renewal of religious conflict in Europe?

I remember once flying into Heathrow airport on my way back from a dusty and fatiguing trip to the Middle East. As we were landing, I looked down and saw suburban London—green, rainy, boring, polite, agnostic—and felt a kind of relief. I was living in England at the time, and I suddenly felt a rush of happiness to have returned to precisely this culture of mildness and moderation, to those damp hedgerows. The chances are, of course, that Christopher Caldwell is right; and Bernard Lewis has predicted that Europe will be Islamic by the end of this century. But I wonder whether the liberal order is really quite so weak and inept, whether the story is quite over just yet. ◆

Benny Morris
DERISIONIST HISTORY

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE: REAPPRAISALS, REVISIONS, REFUTATIONS
By Avi Shlaim
(Verso, 392 pp., $34.95)

Avi Shlaim burst upon the scene of Middle Eastern history in 1988, with the publication of *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine*. Before that, as a young lecturer at Reading University in England, he had produced two books, *British Foreign Secretaries Since 1945* (1977) and *The United States and the Berlin Blockade, 1948–1949* (1983), and several revealing essays on modern Middle Eastern historical issues in academic journals. But it was *Collusion Across the Jordan*, with its 676 pages of solid and well-written research, that thrust him into the academic limelight.

Shlaim's book traced the thirty-year relationship between the Jewish Agency for Palestine and, later, the government of Israel and Prince Abdullah (later King) of Transjordan (later Jordan), focusing on their secret friendly ties and mutual interests—the "collusion" of the title—during the 1948 war, and their unsuccessful secret peace negotiations, which were suspended just before Abdullah's assassination by a Palestinian gunman in July 1951. Shlaim argued that Abdullah and the leadership of the Yishuv, the Jewish community in Palestine/Israel, were united in their fear and their hatred of Haj Amin Al Husseini, the leader of the Palestinian national movement, and also in coveting the territory of Palestine; and so they agreed, in the run-up to the 1948 war, to "collude" to prevent the Palestinians from establishing a state.

Bowing to the realities of power, Shlaim contended, the Hashemite king and the Zionists agreed to divide the territory between themselves. As it turned out, and despite fierce Israeli-Jordanian clashes in and around Jerusalem, this is exactly what happened in the course of the war, the Jordanians occupying and eventually annexing the West Bank—the core of the area allotted by the United Nations partition resolution of November

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1947 for a Palestinian Arab state—and the Jews establishing the state of Israel on the remainder (minus the Gaza Strip, also allotted to the Palestinians, which Egypt occupied in the course of the war and held until 1967). And following the war, the two countries embarked on peace negotiations, but failed to conclude a deal. Shlaim argues that it was an unconciliatory Israel that was largely responsible for the diplomatic failure—as it was, also, for the failure to explore properly the options for peace with Syria and Egypt that opened up, in his view, in those immediate postwar years.

Much of Shlaim's spadework, especially relating to Zionist-Arab diplomacy before, during, and after the war, was original, but his thesis itself, about the nature of Jordanian-Israeli relations before and during 1948, was not. Israel Ber—who had served as an important officer on the General Staff of the Haganah, the Yishuv's main pre-state militia that changed its name later to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and on the General Staff of the IDF in 1949–1950 (before his resignation, he headed its Planning and Operations Department)—had suggested the "collusion" thesis in his book *Israel's Security: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow*, published posthumously in 1966. And Dan Schueftan and Uri Bar-Joseph had presented and analyzed it in their learned and well-argued works, *A Jordanian Option* (1986) and *The Best of Enemies* (1987).

But Ber's was an unannotated political essay by a discredited man—he was jailed in 1961 as a Soviet spy—and it appeared only in Hebrew. Schueftan's work also appeared only in Hebrew, and Bar-Joseph's drew little attention. Shlaim certainly did his work more thoroughly, and he wrote with verve and elegance. Though one or two critics suggested that Shlaim had given too much weight to oral testimony elicited decades after the events described, *Collusion Across the Jordan* enjoyed wide acclaim. Some of that, without a doubt, was owed to what was seen as the book's anti-Israeli slant.

The title itself gave the game away. When two states, with whose policies and leaders one agrees, act in unison against a third party, their cooperation is usually described as an alliance or a partnership. "Collusion," by contrast, is a pejorative term. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines "collusion" as a "fraudulent secret understanding, especially between ostensible opponents as in a lawsuit." For many Britons (the book first appeared in England), the word raised the specter of the "imperialist collusion" between Israel, Britain, and France in their attack on Nasser's Egypt in 1956; all three were vilified by opponents of the war as conspiring against a relatively innocent and weak Third World third party. Heeding criticism of the loaded title, Shlaim later published an abridged version of his book under the title *Politics of Partition*, but subsequently he expressed remorse over his momentary lapse, and stated that he should have stayed with *Collusion*. (He resurrects the usage in his new book when he speaks of "the Sharon-Bush collusion" against the Palestinians during the Second Intifada.)

In *Collusion Across the Jordan*, only one of the parties to the "collusion" was pilloried—the Yishuv and its leaders, chiefly David Ben-Gurion, chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive and, from May 14, 1948, Israel's prime minister and defense minister. Ben-Gurion is portrayed as conniving, inflexible, and war-mongering. The other party to the "collusion," Jordan, was let off by Shlaim with barely a slap on the wrist. Indeed, Abdullah was held up as a wise, noble, and peace-craving statesman—a portrait, incidentally, that greatly endeared Shlaim to the Hashemite princes, and did much to open doors for him in Amman for his subsequent biography of King Hussein, *Lion of Jordan: The Life of King Hussein in War and Peace*, which appeared in 2008. (Abdullah was Hussein's beloved grandfather.) The fact that Abdullah, in defiance of the U.N. resolution of 1947, had occupied the core area of the proposed Palestinian state, and during the following years did nothing to promote Palestinian statehood in the West Bank, and, indeed, did a great deal to stifle Palestinian nationalism, and that in 1949–1951 he had proved unable to persuade and unwilling to force his Cabinet to endorse peace or even a limited non-belligerency pact with Israel—all this was somehow exempted from the moral fervor that characterized Shlaim's treatment of Israel.

To be sure, Shlaim's attitude to Israel earned him prestige among his British, European, and Arab academic colleagues. So did his voluminous *The Iron Wall* (2000), a history of Israeli-Arab relations since 1948. In his new book, a collection of essays, in a piece called "Free Speech? Not for Critics of Israel," Shlaim sums up that book not inaccurately: "The central theme of . . . *The Iron Wall* is that Israel throughout its history too readily resorted to military force, and has been unwilling to engage in meaningful diplomacy."

In fact, *The Iron Wall* was more balanced than that. In the heat of his current pro-Palestinian righteousness, Shlaim forgets that *The Iron Wall* devoted many pages to the Israeli-Egyptian and Israeli-Syrian post–October War disengagement negotiations, which led to substantial Israeli troop withdrawals; and to the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations and peace treaty of 1977–1979, which saw Israel evacuate every last inch of the Sinai Peninsula; and to the Israel-PLO Oslo accords and the negotiations that resulted in the Israel-Jordan 1994 peace treaty. And while Ehud Barak's (and Bill Clinton's) efforts in 2000 to achieve an Israeli-Palestinian peace may not have been successful, they cannot be airily dismissed as "meaningless" diplomacy. Indeed, one can say that in the course of its sixty-year history, Israel has engaged in very meaningful diplomacy—and in diplomacy that resulted in its evacuation of huge swathes of territory (Sinai alone is three times the size of Israel) and in peace treaties with two of its Arab neighbors.

Shlaim often refers to himself as an Israeli, though Wikipedia's designation of him as a "British historian" is more accurate: born in Baghdad in 1945 and educated as a historian in Britain, Shlaim has lived in the United Kingdom since 1966. He was one of a small group who emerged in the late 1980s and were lumped together and designated—actually by me, in an article in *Tikkun*, an American Jewish journal—as the "New Historians," their collective work being the "New Historiography." I included myself and my own work in this rubric. It countered the "Old Historiography" of the "Old Historians," which painted a roseate portrait of Zionism and its works. The "Old Historians" generally ignored, omitted, or otherwise swept under the carpet all that was morally reprehensible and dubious and unwise in the activities of the Yishuv and Israel before and after 1948. The "New Historians," availing themselves of Israel's very liberal Archives Law and its newly opened archives (and also British, U.N., and American material), published a series of books in the late 1980s that were critical of the traditional Zionist historical narrative. *Collusion Across the Jordan* was one of those transgressive books.

Over the past decade, the New Historians—we were never a tightly knit school but were all, loosely, "of the Left"—have largely parted ways politically. Ilan Pappé, formerly of Haifa University and now of the University of Exeter; Tom Segev, a journalist at *Ha'aretz* who does

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history on the side (in *The Seventh Million: Israelis and the Holocaust*, an important work on the Yishuv's reaction to the Holocaust and the role of the Holocaust in post-1948 Israeli politics, and most recently in *1967*, a far less impressive work); and Avi Shlaim steadily drifted leftward (if that really is the direction of people expressing understanding and sympathy for the likes of Yasser Arafat and Hamas), largely under the impact of the Second Intifada. I myself, while still believing that a two-state solution is the only just solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, have moved marginally rightward—and in *Israel and Palestine*, while mildly praising my historiographic work, Shlaim castigates me for this in an essay called "Benny Morris and the Betrayal of History." ("Benny is in danger of becoming … 'a genuine charlatan,'" Shlaim writes, which is a very British way of saying that I am a charlatan. Also "his post-conversion interpretation of history is old history with a vengeance … indistinguishable from the propaganda of the victors." Shlaim fails to explain how, precisely, I have "betrayed history," and his name-calling is motivated solely by political disagreement.)

Israel and Palestine, which will probably earn Shlaim more Israel-bashing brownie points than all his previous books combined, is a collection of academic essays and reviews, along with some journalistic articles about politics. The pieces are mostly an extended exercise in anti-Zionism, nothing more. There is also one interview, originally published in *The New York Review of Books* in 1999, in which Shlaim asks King Hussein about his meetings with Israeli officials and leaders from the 1960s until the 1990s, and about Jordan's participation, or non-participation, in the wars of 1967 and 1973. The monarch's responses are vague, fluffy, and imprecise (he often answers that he cannot remember but will later look for the relevant documents, which, of course, are never referred to again) and generally uninformative, heavily larded with avowals of goodwill and the love of peace.

The scholarly essays deal with "The Balfour Declaration and its Consequences"; "The Rise and Fall of the All-Palestine Government in Gaza," an impotent, short-lived organization established by the Egyptians in September 1948 as a means of controlling Palestinian politics, countering King Abdullah's territorial, claims and, if one is prone to generosity, providing the Palestinians with some sort of representation; and "Husni Zaim and the Plan to Resettle Palestinian Refugees in Syria." This last essay, which was trailblazing when published in 1986, describes a peace overture by Husni Zaim, Syria's short-lived prime minister.

Zaim ruled Syria from March 30, 1949, to August 14, 1949, when he was deposed and executed by his colleagues. Working through American and U.N. mediators, Zaim proposed peace with Israel, and also that Syria absorb a quarter of a million Palestinian refugees in exchange for Israeli cession of the eastern half of the Sea of Galilee (according to the U.N. partition resolution, the whole sea was to be within Israeli territory) and, by implication, the Israeli-owned strip of land to the east of the lake, which included Kibbutz Ein-Gev.

Israel and Syria were at the time in the middle of armistice negotiations, and Ben-Gurion suspected that Zaim's move was a ploy to delay Syrian withdrawal from Israeli territory that it had conquered during the war, which Israel was demanding. At the same time Ben-Gurion believed that Zaim was not trustworthy. (The Syrian was apparently a CIA agent and had previously been in intermittent contact with Haganah intelligence officers.) Ben-Gurion was in any case unwilling to give up half of Israel's major water resource, and to surrender hard-won territory in exchange for a bilateral peace agreement on which the Syrians could at any time renege. He refused to meet with Zaim until the Syrians agreed to withdraw from Israeli territory, and the Syrians rejected the Israeli proposal to negotiate at the foreign ministers level.

According to Shlaim, Zaim gave Israel "every opportunity to bury the hatchet and lay the foundations for peaceful coexistence in the long term," but an "intransigent" Israel and a "short-sighted" Ben-Gurion "spurned" his offer and "frittered away" a "historic opportunity." A historic opportunity? I am not so sure, and in the absence of Syrian documentation the seriousness of Zaim's offer and his ability to carry it out remain unclear. (Itamar Rabinovich, in *The Road Not Taken*, highlighted Zaim's internal problems in this respect.) Equally unclear is what would have been the fate, after Zaim's death, of any agreement that he had signed. It is also worth asking whether a semi-arid country should give up half of its main water resource (and territory) in exchange for a peace treaty of doubtful longevity with a country that has just attacked it. Shlaim, intent on pillorying Israel, does not ask this question.

On the face of it, Shlaim's essay on the Balfour Declaration—the British declaration of November 2, 1917, which supported the establishment of a "Jewish national home" in Palestine—appears to be a straightforward inquiry into what happened and why, based on the documents. Yet it exudes an unscholarly myopia, a selectivity in the use of documents, which hints at anti-Zionist prejudice. Why did the British issue such a seemingly uncalled-for and unrealistic declaration? After all, the Zionists, even "the Jews," had little power in or over the British government or any other major government, and a very meager presence in Palestine itself. (In 1917 there were some 55,000 Jews and 650,000 Arabs in the country.) Indeed, the only Jew in the British government, Edwin Montagu, fiercely opposed Balfour's declaration, and most of the world's Jews were non-Zionists or anti-Zionists. All knew it would alienate tens of millions of Arabs and perhaps many Muslims besides.

So why did Britain issue the declaration? Shlaim devotes several pages to reviewing the prevailing explanations. Leonard Stein, in his classic study *The Balfour Declaration*, suggested that it was

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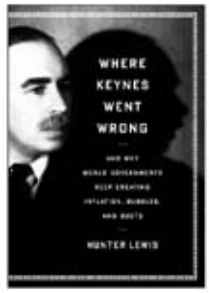

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due to "the activity and skill [as a persuader]" of Zionist lobbyist and leader Chaim Weizmann. The historian Mayir Verete offered a contrary thesis: that the British government was motivated by "British imperial interests in the Middle East"—that is, safeguarding the Suez Canal from the east and keeping France out of Palestine. As an afterthought Shlaim adds that the British may have hoped to "enlist the support of the Jews of America and Russia" for the anti-German war effort, or to pre-empt a similar declaration by the German government. Again, imperial British wartime interests.

Shlaim then gives pride of place to Tom Segev's explanation in his book *One Palestine, Complete*—"a [historiographic] step forward," Shlaim calls it. According to Shlaim, quoting Segev, David Lloyd George, Britain's prime minister in 1917, pushed the declaration out of "ignorance and prejudice." Lloyd George "despised the Jews, but he also feared them," believing in their world-embracing "power and influence." The people who sired the document "believed the Jews controlled the world," says Shlaim, quoting Segev. Which is to say, the Balfour Declaration was primarily a product of anti-Semitism. Historians love paradoxes, even fictitious ones.

Shlaim fails completely to mention the relevance of philo-Semitism and philo-Zionism as a decisive factor in the issuance of the declaration. Indeed, it was probably the single most potent factor in the support of the key Cabinet ministers: Lloyd George, Arthur James Balfour himself, Lord Milner, Robert Cecil, and Jan Smuts. Brought up on the Bible and on a belief in the Jews' contribution to Judeo-Christian civilization, these potentates believed that Christendom owed the Jews a debt—and that it must atone for two thousand years of persecution by restoring them to their land. As Balfour told the House of Lords in 1922:

> It is in order that we may send a message to every land where the Jewish race has been scattered, a message that will tell them that Christendom is not oblivious of their faith, is not unmindful of the service they have rendered to the great religions of the world, and most of all to the religion that the majority of Your Lordships' house profess, and that we desire to the best of our ability to give them that opportunity of developing … those great gifts which hitherto they have been compelled to bring to fruition in countries that know not their language and belong not to their race? This is the ideal which I desire to see accomplished, that is the aim that lay at the root of the policy I am trying to defend; and though it be defensible indeed on every ground [he means imperial interests, and so on], that is the ground which chiefly moves me.

Shlaim would have it that Balfour, George, Milner, Smuts, and Cecil were all liars or dissemblers. I prefer to believe them. It was mainly their esteem and their sympathy for the Jews that drove them into supporting the harebrained scheme known as Zionism. No doubt material wartime interests and postwar imperial calculations also played a part. Yet Shlaim cannot resist an opportunity to assert his high ethical credentials, his anti-Zionism and anti-imperialism at once, two birds with one stone: "Britain had no moral right to promise a national home for a tiny Jewish minority"—why "tiny"? The Zionists expected millions to pour into the country, as in fact they did—"in a predominantly Arab country. It did so not for altruistic reasons but for selfish and misguided ones."

Shlaim once said that he believes historians should not merely describe and analyze but also act as "judge and jury" (or was it "judge, jury, and executioner"?)—that it is their responsibility to pass moral judgment on the actions (and the thinking?) of their protagonists. He has a powerful confidence in his own "moral compass." He once wrote that I had lost mine. I do not believe that historians should moralize in their historiography: it is a sign of hubris, and it is tedious. My belief is that historians should seek truth, not "justice," and describe and analyze events, using as wide a range of sources as possible to try and work out why people acted as they did and what were the consequences—and then let the reader judge, using his or her own "moral compass," whether the protagonists were right or wrong, wise or unwise.

Shlaim concludes his essay on the Balfour Declaration with the flat personal assertion that "I can only agree with Sir John Chancellor [British high commissioner to Palestine, 1928–1931] that the Balfour Declaration was a colossal blunder—it has proved to be a catastrophe for the Palestinians and it gave rise to one of the most intense, bitter, and protracted conflicts in modern times." But of course it was not the declaration but Zionism itself—the successive waves of Jewish immigration to Palestine, and the creation of Jewish social and political and economic institutions there, with the aim of recreating a sovereign Jewish state—that gave rise to the conflict.

What does all this tell us about Shlaim's views? Well, he sets out his credo in the introduction to *Israel and Palestine*, where he tells us that "The Jews are a people and, like any other people, they have a natural right to national self-determination. In the aftermath of the Second World War, the moral case for a Jewish state became unassailable.… This was the background to the UN resolution of 29 November 1947 … an international charter of legitimacy for the Jewish state.… Arabs … felt that the gift of Palestine to the Jews was illegal. However, a resolution passed by the UN General Assembly by a large majority cannot be illegal. It may be unjust but not illegal." Subsequently, Israel and the Arab states agreed in armistice negotiations and accords on Israel's borders. "These are the only borders," Shlaim writes, "that I regard as legitimate." So, he concludes, "I believe the creation of the State of Israel involved a terrible injustice to the Palestinians.… I fully accept the legitimacy of the State of Israel within its pre-1967 borders."

In 1967, Israel conquered the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, Sinai, and the Gaza Strip. In November of that year, the U.N. Security Council passed Resolution 242. The resolution, Shlaim informs us, stressed "the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by war, and the resolution … called on Israel to give up the territories it had captured in return for peace." Actually, the resolution, in its definitive English version, spoke of giving up not "the territories" but "territories," as Shlaim notes elsewhere in his book. "But," he continues, "Israel preferred land to peace." Actually, it has been a mixed bag—as Shlaim well knows. Israel gave up the Sinai Peninsula in exchange for peace with Egypt, and hundreds of square kilometers of territory in exchange for peace with Jordan, and on June 19, 1967 (and, again, in 1994–2000) offered to give up the Golan Heights in exchange for peace with Syria. It has also given up the Gaza Strip without getting any peace in return. In the case of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, matters have been more complicated and Israel has been less "giving." But historically speaking, the bald claim that "Israel preferred land to peace" is something less than a half-truth.

About more recent times, Shlaim has this to say: "I reject, and reject utterly, completely and uncompromisingly, the Zionist colonial project beyond [the pre-1967 borders]." And also this: "Ilan Pappé and I [following the Second Intifada] … held on to our belief that Israel bears the

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primary responsibility for both the persistence and the escalation of the conflict" This is a persistent nonsense. Far fewer Israelis or Palestinians have died in the major bouts of violence of the past three decades than, say, in 1948, or 1973; and of course both peoples suffered far more in 1948. The recent Israeli-Palestinian bouts of violence, the First Intifada (roughly 1987–1991) and the Second Intifada (roughly 2000–2004), have been more prolonged than the previous wars, but far less bloody and exacting. And as for the wider Israeli-Arab conflict, the region has seen, strategically speaking, a substantial de-escalation, with two Arab states making peace with Israel during the past three decades. There were wars between Israel and Arab states in 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, and 1982, but none since then. And the recent bouts of violence between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006 and Israel and Hamas in Gaza in 2008–2009 were extended campaigns between a state and terrorist organizations, not "wars."

As for the future, Shlaim writes: "The only fair and reasonable solution is the partition of Palestine … a two-state solution." Presumably he means a Jewish state called Israel in the pre-1967 borders and a Palestinian Arab state composed of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem. He does not tell us whether he is amenable to minor border changes between the two states to allow, say, for the incorporation in Israel of Jewish settlement blocs along the Green Line (the pre-1967 demarcation line between Israel and the West Bank) or, for that matter, of border-hugging Israeli Arab settlements in a Palestinian state.

All in all, there is much to be said for Shlaim's credo. The problem with *Israel and Palestine* is the dissonance, which is sometimes very jarring, between these lofty professions of faith and Shlaim's assertions (and their tone) about the very recent history of the conflict, which are not just critical of Israel's post-1967 expansionism, but also unrestrainedly anti-Zionist and anti-Israeli. On page 307, for example, he tells us that the establishment of Israel "involved a monumental injustice to the Palestinians," and goes on to quote a leading British Foreign Office anti-Semite, John Troutbeck, in 1948, to the effect that the Americans were responsible "for the creation of a gangster state headed by 'an utterly unscrupulous set of leaders.'" Shlaim comments: "I used to think this judgement was too harsh," but then Israel's "vicious" assault on Gaza in December 2008–January 2009 "reopened the question." His logic here is faulty: either Israel's leaders in 1948 were "unscrupulous" and Israel was, at its inception, a "gangster state," or it was not. These have nothing to do with how Israel behaved, or allegedly behaved, sixty years later. But more alarming than Shlaim's lapse of logic is the content of his assertion, which seems to involve a renunciation of the credo that I have just outlined. "Legitimate" and "gangster state" have some difficulty in co-existing.

Palestinian political aspirations, then and now, were "just," according to Shlaim. He never applies the word to Zionist aspirations, before 1948 or after. Was Israel's establishment "just," and is its continued existence "just," in light of the monumental "injustice" that it caused the Palestinians? Should the Jews never have established their state in Palestine? Shlaim implicitly leaves on the table the standard Palestinian argument that the Palestinians have had to pay for an injustice committed against the Jews by others. Nowhere in this book does Shlaim say a word about the Jewish people's three-thousand-year-old connection to the Land of Israel—that this land was the Jewish people's cradle; that they subsequently ruled it, on and off, for over a thousand years; and that for the next two millennia, after going into exile, they aspired and longed for repatriation. Nor does he mention that the Arabs, who had no connection to Palestine, in the seventh century conquered the land "unjustly" from the Byzantine Empire and "illegally" settled in it, forcibly converting it into an "Arab" land. If conquest does not grant rightful claim, then surely this should be true universally?

Nowhere does Shlaim tell us of the persecution, oppression, and occasional mass murder of Jews by Muslim Arabs over the centuries, starting with Muhammad's destruction of the Jewish communities in Hijaz and ending with the pogroms in Aden and Morocco in 1947–1948. And nowhere does Shlaim point out that the Palestinian Arabs had an indirect hand in causing the death of European Jewry during the Holocaust, by driving the British, through anti-British and anti-Zionist violence, to shut the gates of Palestine, which was the only possible safe haven, after the United States and the Anglo-Saxon world had shut their gates to escaping European Jews. And, more directly, Palestinian (and other Arab) leaders contributed to the Holocaust by politically supporting Hitler and, in the case of Haj Amin al Husseini, actually working in Berlin for the Third Reich, peddling Nazi propaganda to the Arab world and raising troops for the Wehrmacht.

Most scholars try to be thoughtful, moderate, and balanced when putting their thoughts into print, even if they are more truculent and extreme in their speech. Shlaim is the opposite. On stage, he is all sweet reasonableness, sensitive and fair-minded, in the manner of an Oxonian gentleman; but in print he is harsh, unbalanced, immoderate, and occasionally wild. He calls the young Yitzhak Rabin a "predator." Ariel Sharon is variously described as a "bully" and "merciless," his career marked by "the most savage brutality." Shlaim even speaks of Sharon's "attempts to destroy the Palestinian people." In 2002, at the height of the Second Intifada, when Sharon was prime minister, he "waged a savage war against [the Palestinian] people which included … the bombardment of refugee camps … attacks on medical facilities … and summary executions."

To be sure, in the Second Intifada there was quite a bit of "savagery"—but most of it was Palestinian. I know that terrorism is the inevitable—and for Shlaim and his ilk, the "understandable"—weapon of the weak. But the massive terrorism of the Palestinians, religious and so-called secular (both Hamas and Fatah suicide bombers believed that they were headed for heaven), truly merited the designation "savage"; and it was the series of suicide bombings that culminated in the Passover bombing at the Park Hotel in Netanya, with thirty-five dead and dozens of severely wounded, that triggered the IDF reoccupation of the Palestinian cities, which was actually conducted with great care for the lives of civilians. Though the Palestinians shouted "massacre" at every turn, as they have done for more than sixty years whenever Israel retaliates following their own acts of savagery, there was almost no deliberate killing of civilians by Israel in the four-year-long Second

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Intifada (whereas most of Israel's 1,300 or so dead were deliberately targeted civilians). Of the four thousand Arabs killed, less than one-third were civilians. This is not nothing, but it is not quite what Shlaim says it is.

The Israeli Air Force did not, as Shlaim states, "bomb refugee camps." Had it done so, there would have been hundreds or thousands of dead after each mission, but this was not the case. The IAF bombed specific targets in refugee camps (and outside them)—terrorist headquarters, the homes of terrorist leaders, military bunkers, and so on. There certainly were casualties—but this was inevitable, given that the Palestinians, in 2002 as today, placed their arsenals, their command posts, and their hideaways inside and on the peripheries of refugee camps. During the Israeli assault on Hamas in Gaza at the end of 2008, the Hamas leaders sat out the campaign in the basement of Gaza's Shifa Hospital, gambling—correctly—that Israel would not bomb or storm a hospital.

And is Shlaim fair in his description of Sharon's career? Take the phrase "the most savage brutality." Presumably he is referring to the young Sharon who, in October 1953, led the infamous IDF attack on the West Bank village of Kibya, in which about sixty villagers were killed (in retaliation for a terrorist grenade attack at the nearby Israeli settlement of Yehud, in which a mother and her two children were murdered). If Kibya may be described as "the most savage brutality," then what words are left to describe, say, Iraq's gassing of thousands of Kurds in the 1980s, or the Sudanese Arabs' mass murder of Darfurians and Christians, or Syria's slaughter of twenty thousand or so Muslims in its own city of Hama in 1982? Were Sharon's various campaigns, including the assault on the PLO in Lebanon and the reoccupation of the West Bank's cities in 2002, after a string of suicide bombings claimed hundreds of Israeli lives in Tel Aviv, Netanya, Haifa, and Jerusalem, really "attempts to destroy the Palestinian people"—as, say, Turkey's slaughter of the Armenians in World War I or Hitler's murder of the Jews in World War II, were "attempts to destroy" peoples? Orwell would have charged Shlaim with abusing the English language, and noted, too, that Shlaim's careless and inflammatory hyperbole is always directed against only one party.

When it comes to the Arabs, Shlaim is often mealy-mouthed, hesitant, disingenuous, and laudatory. Thus he tells us at one point that "the Palestinian people succeeded in building the only genuine democracy in the Arab world with the possible exception of Lebanon and Morocco." I am sure that the imprisoned opponents of the absolutist monarchy in Rabat would be much amused—as would various Shiites, Greek Catholics, and Sunni Muslims in Lebanon. So would the Fatah prisoners tortured in Hamas jails in Gaza, and the Hamas prisoners tortured in Fatah jails in the West Bank. Does a single relatively open and successful general election transform a polity into a democracy?

One-sidedness and plain unfairness permeate almost every subject touched and every argument propounded in *Israel and Palestine*, perverting and distorting history. Take Shlaim on the post–Second Intifada Sharon. In 2005, breaking away from the Likud, Sharon uprooted all Israeli settlements in, and withdrew from, the Gaza Strip, and indicated that he intended a similar unilateral withdrawal—as he believed there was no peace partner on the other side with whom he could reach agreement—from the bulk of the West Bank. The evacuation from Gaza should have cheered Shlaim, who supports Israeli withdrawal from the territories. Instead he divines a nefarious plot, hatched with George W. Bush's complicity. "The real purpose behind the plan," Shlaim writes, "was to sweep away the remnants of Oslo, to undermine the position of Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Authority, and to derail the road map [for a two-state solution]. . . . The plan is a pitch for politicide." Presumably, if and when Israel pulls out of the bulk of the West Bank—again unilaterally, as there is still no credible Palestinian partner for peace—Shlaim will continue to inveigh against Israeli plots and Israeli-American conspiracies.

Sharon, who a few months after the Gaza pullout had a massive stroke and departed the political arena, never made clear how much of the West Bank he intended to evacuate. He was the driving spirit behind the construction of the security barrier separating the territory from pre-1967 Israel. The barrier probably indicated the lines to which Sharon intended to withdraw, though the initial motivation for building the barrier was to keep out suicide bombers, and in this purpose it was highly successful. The barrier—more than 90 percent of it is a fence, though Shlaim refers to it, in line with common Arab and Western usage, as "the wall"—incorporates (or will do so, when it is finished) about 7 percent of the West Bank into Israel. This 7 percent includes the large border-hugging settlement blocs that Israel intends to keep, and that both President Clinton and President Bush agreed should be ceded to Israel, with Israel compensating the Palestinians with land elsewhere. In Shlaim's account, however, the "wall will gobble up by the time it is completed . . . 15 to 25 percent" of the West Bank—an exaggeration by 200 to 300 percent—and, alongside the Barak-Clinton peace plan (or "parameters") of July and December 2000, will slice up the West Bank into several "bantustans," preventing a contiguous Palestinian state.

Of course, a Palestinian state, if it ever emerges, will never be contiguous, inasmuch as the West Bank and Gaza Strip are separated by Israeli territory; but neither the barrier nor the Barak-Clinton proposals would have violated the contiguity of the West Bank (see the relevant map at the start of Dennis Ross's *The Missing Peace*). Shlaim also charges that the barrier creates "an environmental catastrophe." This, too, is hysterical nonsense. It is true that the barrier separates several thousand villagers from their fields and workplaces, making their lives difficult and requiring

Time

To change your mind, I made a perfect replica of the world—
vase-crested elms, birches sloughing their papery bark,
self-contained poplars, slow-whirling maple keys.
I sketched in our marriage bed, unmoving ceiling fan,
the mirror withheld and pollen-dusted like lake water.
I had forgotten the high almost-motionless clouds,
clouds of early summer, with their insidious shadow
lighting like a fly on the rim of a wineglass.
The rain like a cat behind the rose bushes. The reprieve.
Novice fireflies, here and not here, here-and-not-here.
Strawberry starts that grow so wild, woody clumps,
without the touch of a hand. Instead of time,
I inked in suffering. I meant it to be mine,
but because I couldn't feel, I pressed too hard—
through the rip I saw darkness, your eyes,
emptiness of a room, night with its billion lights.

D. NURKSE

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complicated improvisatory solutions. But bombs exploding in downtown Tel Aviv and Haifa—as happened almost daily at the height of the Second Intifada, which is what drove the construction of the barrier—also creates "difficulties." These "difficulties" never exercise Shlaim and his "moral compass."

Shlaim fails in this volume to properly describe what was without doubt a historic turning point in the conflict: the Barak-Arafat-Clinton negotiations in Camp David in July 2000, and the subsequent "Clinton Parameters" of December 2000. He fails to inform his readers even of what it was that the Palestinians were offered. Instead he declares that "the most fundamental cause of the failure … lies not in Arafat's psychological makeup but in Barak's package." He singles out Barak's demand that the Palestinians agree that the offered package would be final—that is, agree to an "end of conflict" and an "end of claims." "This remorseless insistence on finality," Shlaim explains, "was in fact part of the problem, not the solution," as if most peace treaties include a loophole that one of the parties may resume hostilities after signing the treaty if all its demands are not met.

The Barak offer—a Palestinian state on 100 percent of the Gaza Strip and 91 percent of the West Bank—"was a reasonable basis," Shlaim says, "for an interim agreement, not for the final end of the conflict." Is Shlaim hinting here that he supports such Palestinian demands as the full repatriation of the five million refugees to the territory of pre-1967 Israel, the "right of return" espoused by the PLO and Hamas (and all the Arab states)? He doesn't tell us. Nor, indeed, does he tell his readers that Clinton, in his "Parameters," substantially upped the ante by awarding the Palestinians 95 percent of the West Bank, and sovereignty over half of Jerusalem and the surface area of the Temple Mount—and that the Palestinians again responded with a flat "no." Again, bizarrely, Shlaim speaks of an Israeli-American "conspiracy" to "corner" the lamb-like Palestinians, which they rightly defied.

Nowhere in this volume is Shlaim more scathing than in his criticism of Israel's retaliatory assault on Hamas in Gaza in December 2008–January 2009. "Merciless," "unremitting brutality," "totally disproportionate," "indiscriminate": these are some of the phrases he uses. He concludes his book by asserting that Israel has "become a rogue state with 'an utterly unscrupulous set of leaders' … In Gaza it went too far: It sowed the wind and it will surely reap the whirlwind." Is he referring to a possible Iranian nuclear attack on Israel? Is he justifying it in advance?

At one point Shlaim concedes that "Hamas is not an entirely innocent party in this conflict." But he quickly buries this observation under his own display of the basic inability of many Western liberals to come to grips with the phenomenon that they are confronting: true believers with a fundamentalist ideology. Shlaim says that it is wrong to portray the Hamas as "just a bunch of religious fanatics.… The simple truth is that the Palestinian people are a normal people with normal aspirations. They are no better but they are no worse than any other national group."

But the Hamas leaders daily repeat the slogan, from their Charter or Constitution of 1988, that "Israel will exist until … Islam will obliterate it." Does that sound like a "normal aspiration"? Do most people around the world speak this way about their neighbors? What does this, or the mass festivities in the streets of Nablus and Gaza when a suicide bomber successfully exploded in a bus in Tel Aviv, tell us about the Palestinians, who voted Hamas into power in free elections in 2006? Shlaim blithely informs his readers that "like other radical movements, Hamas began to moderate its political program following its rise to power." He acknowledges "the ideological rejectionism" of Hamas's charter, but he declares confidently that Hamas has begun "to move towards pragmatic accommodation of a two-state solution. Its spokesmen said many times that they would accept a Palestinian state within the 1967 borders and offered a long-term truce on that basis."

Shlaim hears what he wants to hear, not what is actually said. The "moderate" Hamas leader Ismail Haniya almost daily repeats that Hamas will never recognize Israel, and less frequently says that it will continue the struggle until all of Palestine reverts to Palestinian Muslim rule. Hamas "extremists" such as Khalid Mashal speak even more firmly about Israel's eventual demise and its replacement with a Muslim polity governed in line with *sharia* law. Indeed, *sharia* has been gradually imposed, without much fanfare, in the Gaza Strip since Hamas gained dominion there—no mixing of the sexes in public, harsh dress codes, no alcohol, no cinemas, no Internet cafes, and, gradually, no Christians (a few have been murdered, most have left).

True, Hamas's leaders over the past few years have sometimes spoken about a prolonged truce—if Israel first agrees to withdraw to the 1967 borders and accepts the "right of return" of the refugees. Is this tantamount to accepting a two-state solution? Of course not. And we are talking tactics, not strategy. Hamas, despite massive pressure by the Palestinian Authority, Israel, and the United States, has been firm in resisting changes in its political goals, which are the destruction of Israel and the imposition of *sharia* law. When Hamas leaders amend the Charter in accordance with Shlaim's irenic fantasies, I will start to believe that it is changing; but not a moment before.

About Israel's restrictions on the flow of goods into the Gaza Strip since the Hamas takeover, Shlaim observes that "the aim was to starve the people of Gaza into submission" and resulted in "a humanitarian catastrophe." This is simply wild. Darfur is a humanitarian catastrophe. Somalia at times has been a humanitarian catastrophe. But Gaza? As far as I know, no Gazan has died of thirst or starvation. There are no African-style bloated bellies there. It is true that Israel has barred the importation of iron and steel and other materials needed for reconstructing houses destroyed or damaged in the December 2008–January 2009 campaign (and, in my view mistakenly, also barred the entry into Gaza of various other goods). But Israel argues, with solid logic, that Hamas would immediately use these materials to rebuild bunkers, munitions storage facilities, trenchworks, and the other institutions and instruments of its aggression.

Without a doubt, history has ill-served the Palestinians. They became a separate and distinct "people" (while remaining part of the greater Arab "people") as a result of the Zionist enterprise and the Zionist challenge, and Zionism has caused them repeated bouts of suffering. Their persistent rejection of compromise, as expressed by their successive leaders, has had a major role in the perpetuation of this suffering. And this suffering appears to fuel Shlaim's animosity toward Israel. But there is a mystery here. Many intellectuals, in Israel as in the West, have been moved by the Palestinians' history and their plight, but at the same time they have remained sympathetic to Israel's predicament, and admiring of its real and in some ways incomparable achievements over the past six decades. In *Israel and Palestine*, by contrast, there is no sign of any such complex sympathy. For Shlaim, Israel and its leaders can do no right. It all begins to seem very personal. What is the source of this bias and this resentment? It is always hazardous to speculate on the motives of writers and scholars. Perhaps one day Shlaim will enlighten us on this score. ◆

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Washington Diarist

Membership

Since the only pain we experience is our own pain, and since our own pain is often not the most hideous pain, particularly if we live far from history's savageries and inside a middle-class existence that was designed to insulate us from all the pain that can be separated from the decay of the body and its death—since all this is the case, morality follows the imagination. This association may offend prudes and dandies, but the only way to be moved by misery with which one has no personal acquaintance is to imagine it. Sympathy, which is responsible for more decency than all the maxims in the world, is almost always my picture of your pain. If suffering had to be shared to be acted upon, there would be even less rescue and less relief then there is. That is why the sudden induction into a hardship, the exchange of external knowledge for internal knowledge, can be transfiguring. A provincialism of consciousness is crossed. The other night I made such a crossing. It was late and I was studying. The house was still. Across the road vermilion leaves on half-denuded branches glowed in the loud light of the streetlamp. I was twisted in a large chair with my book, wrapped in an old Afghan shawl. It appears that my treasonous knees did not like the demands I was making of them, because when I rose from the chair they gave way beneath me. They were not weak, they were dead. I fell to the floor. I started to crawl. When I tried to raise myself back up on my seat, I was legless once more, and fell back the other way. Again I was a heap. I have never experienced powerlessness so purely. Soon my strength returned—the simulation was not complete, because it was not final; but I was shocked by my collapse, and fascinated. I have helped disabled people in and out of chairs, and old people up and down stairs. I thought I understood their infirmity, but I did not understand it at all. So happy is the man who can get by solely on the moral imagination. And even happier the temporary cripple, the man of a helpless hour, who will not soon forget.

What I was reading, before this visitation of finitude, was the most graphic depiction of sex that I have ever encountered in rabbinical literature. It was composed in Provence in the thirteenth century by a rabbi named Isaac ben Yedaiah, and it survives in a unique manuscript at the Jewish Theological Seminary, portions of which a friend published many years ago. "All that an uncircumcised man wants is to lie with a beautiful woman who speaks seductively to him. He can think of nothing except being with her day and night, and grows weary in his attempt to fulfill his desire by making love to her. And she will court the uncircumcised man and lie in his bosom passionately, because he thrusts inside her a long time owing to his foreskin, which impedes ejaculation, and so she is pleasured and reaches an orgasm first. When he decides to go home, she brazenly grabs him and seizes his genitals and says, 'Again, lay!'" This Rubirosa the medieval rabbi contrasts with the circumcised man, "who will find himself performing his task efficiently, emitting his seed as soon as he inserts the crown." As for his woman, "it would have been better for her if he had not known her," since "she does not have an orgasm even once a year, except on rare occasions." (Happy birthday, honey!) Isaac is writing in praise of the lousy lover. Only he, with no foreskin to lead him to hedonistic madness, may find God. This defense of circumcision is as old as Philo, and was canonically formulated by Maimonides, who is cited by Christopher Hitchens, who may have meant Simonides or Eumenides, in a denunciation of circumcision in *God Is Not Great*, his thoughtful study of religion. The same point was recently made by the voluptuary Andrew Sullivan, for whom "forcing boys to have most of their sexual pleasure zones destroyed without their express permission is a form of child abuse." Hitchens idiotically compares it to female genital mutilation, as if circumcision is castration. Sullivan sees the difference, though I was not aware—how could I be?—that the foreskin comprises "most of [the] sexual pleasure zones." Sullivan is once again possessed of another absolute certainty about another Jewish horror for which he has another atrocity photograph. But wait—tap tap tap—link link post post—he has discovered that "new studies showing that it can be very effective against the transmission of HIV may well tip the balance of the argument." Well, yes. The outrage may have to move on.

I swear that the prepuce is not a requirement of pleasure. I cannot speak for Maimonides, I can speak only for myself. My evidence is entirely anecdotal—but what anecdotes! If the objective of the knife was, in Maimonides's words, that "violent concupiscence and lust that goes beyond what is needed [for procreation] are diminished," then the knife failed. We, the sculpted, are immune neither to temptation nor to ecstasy. Our Yom Kippur is not for nothing. And if the Provencal sage was correct—I read him in *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature* and see Richard Gere, the dream *sheygets*, standing naked in *American Gigolo* and explaining that "nobody else would have taken the time"—and we gain our pleasure at the expense of our lovers' pleasure, well, we must atone for that, too. The mohel did not quite mutilate us, in our spirits or in our senses. (Anyway, it was not our religion that made a holy day out of a certain circumcision or a cult out of its blood or a relic out of its foreskin.) There are other reasons, beyond the exploits of *erotica judaica*, to support this ancient practice, as Hanna Rosin showed in a wise piece in *New York*. But the overwhelming consideration is, if you will pardon the expression, membership. I am a Jew and so my son is a Jew. Since I believe that it is an honor to be a Jew, I will not exempt my son from this honor. If I do not make him a Jew, he cannot later choose to be a Jew, or he cannot later choose not to be a Jew, because he will not know what it is he is choosing for or against. My child is free, but not yet. And this is not the only mark that I will leave upon him. Perhaps he will see the love, and the pride, in the mark. But he is not only his father's son, as I was not only my father's son. We are the sons of a people. This should not be so hard to understand. Or is it only *this* people that is so hard to understand? This is not my customary complaint, but I have had my fill of bracing challenges to the legitimacy of my patrimony, of false thinking masquerading as free thinking, of ignorance and contempt. Go find the holes in your own fabric.

Leon Wieseltier

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You deserve a factual look at . . .

Arabian Fables (II)

More fanciful Arab myths to sway world opinion.

Earlier this year, we published our message, "Arabian Fables (I)," in which we made clear how the Arab propaganda machine creates myths and lies with which to misinform the world. We discussed the myths of the "Palestinians"and of the "West Bank" and the mythical concept of "occupied territories". In today's message, we shall address three more of these myths.

What are some of these myths?

Jerusalem ("Arab East Jerusalem"). The Arabs have assiduously propagated the myths that Jerusalem is an Arab capital, that (after Mecca and Medina) Jerusalem is their third holy city, and that it is intolerable to them that infidels (Jews) are in possession of it.

The reality of course is that Jerusalem was never an Arab capital and that it was, until the Jews revitalized it, a dusty provincial city that hardly played any economic, social, or political role. Jerusalem is mentioned hundreds of times in the Jewish Bible and has been the center of the Jewish faith and the focus of Jewish longing ever since the Romans destroyed the Temple in the early years of the first millennium. Not once is Jerusalem mentioned in the Koran.

As to "East Jerusalem": There is East Saint Louis, there is East Hampton, and there used to be East Berlin, but, until the Arab propaganda machine created the concept, there was never in history an "East Jerusalem", let alone an "Arab East Jerusalem".

The eastern part of Jerusalem is now predominantly inhabited by Arabs, though their proportion is decreasing. But what is the reason for this? It is because the Jordanians destroyed all traces of Jewish presence from the eastern part of the city and drove all the Jews out during the 19 years (between 1948 and 1967) in which they were in occupation of the eastern part of the city. The world, informed by Arab propaganda, considers those Jews who wish to return to the eastern part of the city to be troublemakers or worse.

The concept of Jerusalem being a holy Arab city and the capital of whatever political entity the "Palestinians" may eventually form is a myth and so of course is the concept of "Arab East Jerusalem".

"Settlements." When Jordan came into possession of Judea/Samaria and the eastern part of Jerusalem, following the invasion of the newly-formed Jewish state, and stayed in occupation for 19 years, it systematically obliterated all Jewish villages in the area under their occupation, drove out the Jewish inhabitants, and left the area "judenrein" (free of Jews)—the first time that concept had been applied since the Nazis created it during their short and bloody reign in Germany. When the Israelis recovered these territories, they rebuilt these villages, created new ones, and built new towns and suburbs to existing cities, especially Jerusalem.

The Arabs decided to call these towns and villages "settlements", with their connotation of illegitimacy and impermanence. The world, including the United States, is much agitated over these population centers and, goaded by the Arabs, declares them to be impediments to peace. What nonsense! Nobody considers the tens of thousands of Arabs who continue to stream to these territories as impediments to peace.

The term "settlements", too, is a propaganda myth created by the Arabs.

> "The Arab propaganda machine has created myths that have been accepted by much of the world. No peace in the Middle East is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are!"

"Refugees." In 1948, when six Arab armies invaded the Jewish state in order to destroy it on the very day of its birth, broadcasts by the advancing Arab armies appealed to the resident Arabs to leave their homes so as not to be in the way of the invaders. As soon as the "quick victory" was won, they could return to their homes and would also enjoy the loot from the Jews, who would have been driven into the sea. It didn't turn out quite that way. Those Arabs who, despite the urgings of the Jews to stay and to remain calm, foolishly left, became refugees. Those who decided not to yield to those blandishments are now, and have been for over 60 years, citizens of Israel, with all the same rights and privileges as their Jewish fellows.

But what happened to those refugees—by best estimates about 600,000 of them? Did their "Arab brethren" allow them to settle in their countries, to work, and to become productive citizens and useful members of their societies? No! They kept and still keep them, their children, their grandchildren, and in some cases even their great-grandchildren, in miserable "refugee camps", so that they can be used as political and military pawns in order to keep the burning hatred against Israel alive and in order to supply the manpower for the unremitting fight against Israel.

During those more than sixty years, Israel has taken in more than three million Jewish immigrants from all parts of the world and has integrated them productively into its society. According to the "Palestinians", the Arab "refugees" have now marvelously increased to five million (!). It is the intent and fervent desire of the Arabs that all of them should return to Israel so as to destroy the country without the necessity of war.

The "refugees" are a red herring and another myth created by the Arab propaganda machine.

The Arab propaganda machine, aided by the most high-powered public relations firms in the United States and all over, has created myths that, by dint of constant repetition, have been accepted as truth by much of the world. No sensible discussion, no peace in the Middle East, is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are.

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